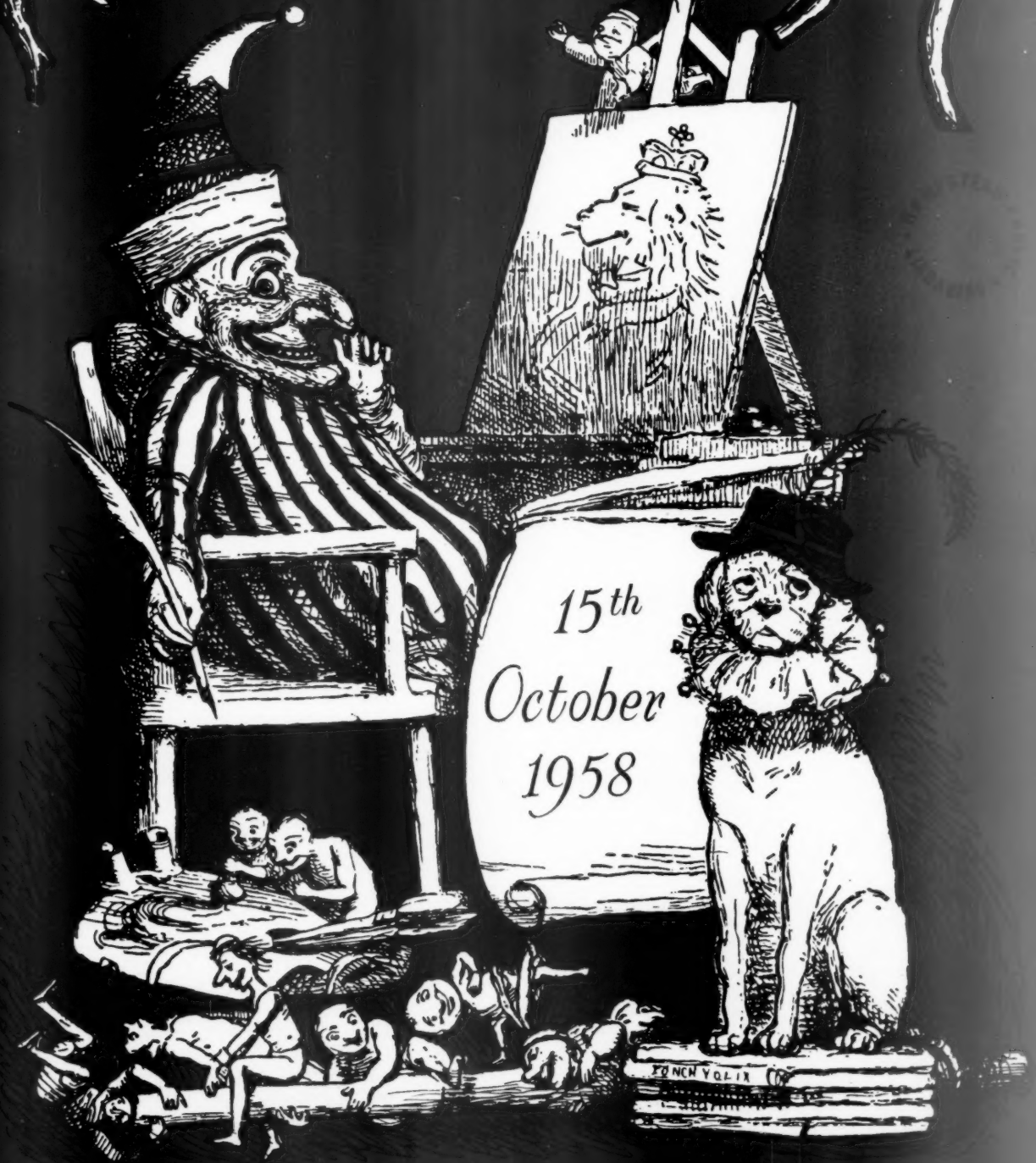


PUNCH



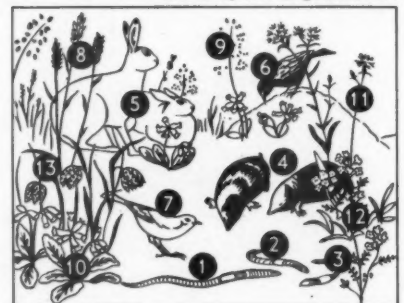
Shell guide to LIFE IN THE MEADOW



Painted by John Leigh Pemberton

Worms, unpoetical creatures, yet not without beauty if you forget their slime, are essential aerators of the meadow soil. Here are three kinds, COMMON EARTHWORM (1), GREEN WORM (2) and ROSY EISENIA (3). Here, too, is the MOLE (4), who tunnels after worms, with a shape no less adapted to life *under* the meadow. HARES (5), meadow-dwellers and grass-eaters, are now commoner in many districts than the rabbit. Two meadow birds are the STARLING (6)—standing in the picture on a mole-hill—and the YELLOW WAGTAIL (7). Of meadow plants, SWEET VERNAL GRASS (8) gives its smell to hay; while QUAKING GRASS (9), useless for cattle, was anciently a magic herb, because of the quaking and shaking of its spikelets in the least stir of air. When they stop shaking they are said to turn to sixpences. Damp meadows are a home for COWSLIPS (10), RAGGED ROBIN (11) and (OUR) LADY'S SMOCK (12), named after the smock worn by the Virgin Mary when Christ was born. St Helena was supposed to have found it in Bethlehem. Favoured meadows, especially by the Upper Thames, will be dark in the last weeks of April with FRITILLARIES (13).

NOTE: All the items shown in this picture would not, of course, be found in one place at one time.



The "Shell Guide to Trees" is now published in book form by Phoenix House Ltd. at 7s. 6d. The Shell Guides to "Flowers of the Countryside", "Birds and Beasts", and "Fossils, Insects and Reptiles" are also available at 7s. 6d. each. On sale at bookshops and bookstalls. In U.S.A. from Transatlantic Art Inc., Hollywood by the sea, Florida, \$2.00.

You can be sure of



The Key to the Countryside

PUNCH

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*For overseas rates see page 520

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R

CHARIVARIA

MR. MACMILLAN's fans at the Conservative Party Conference at Blackpool last week will heartily endorse the indignation felt by the National Operatic and Dramatic Association's president that there should be entertainers about who "get five times as much as the Prime Minister."

COMPETITORS in the "Miss World" beauty contests, leaning heavily on such old-time gimmicks as dogs, vital statistics, intellectual accomplishments, etc., were taken aback by the originality of Miss Israel's ploy—she was "still at home doing her national service."

IN the light of the soaring figures for juvenile crime, British youth-club leaders might have taken a slightly more reserved tone when they recently voiced their approval of state-provided orange-juice and cod-liver oil because "to-day's teenagers have more energy."

PROVINCIAL schoolmasters, reading that ten thousand London children are to have lessons in the Zoo, wonder what



they can possibly learn there that they don't learn in the classroom.

THE bitterness about the European Common Market habitually to be found in the Beaverbrook newspapers overflowed into the world of fashion the other day when the *Sunday Express* fashion-page announced that "adventurous" women would "thread their

belts at Empire level" while the rest might "settle for a more conservative waist."

AMERICAN hatters are running a campaign to popularize the bowler. The men in the Pentagon hope they will



score an early success with Chiang Kai-shek.

"MINISTRY TO DISCUSS BOEING NOISE"
Headline in Daily Telegraph

It sounded more like fffftzz! to us.

FIELD-MARSHAL MONTGOMERY's view that World War II should have ended "by Christmas, 1944" opened old wounds among the over-eager ex-World War I volunteers who remembered that it should have ended by Christmas, 1939.

THE *Daily Telegraph* reminds us that Christmas Island in the Indian Ocean, just transferred to Australia, "should not be confused with Christmas Island in the Pacific." Its inhabitants are said to endorse this opinion particularly strongly.

The Cat Fanciers of Blackpool

THE Tories packed the meeting with the advocates of beating, Which they pressed for with considerable force.

But when Butler cleared the fog, they found they'd nothing left to flog
But a singularly dead dead horse.



Punch Diary

ONE point which I found interesting in the story of the unfortunate boy who was found to be suffering from Television Sickness was that he consulted a specialist. What *kind* of a specialist? Is this a new and sinister development in the field of pathology? Are we in future to encounter nameplates in Harley Street referring to specialists in Pedestrian Crossing Vertigo, Bicycle-chain Fixation, Rock-'n'-Roll Itch, Bubble-car Claustrophobia, Horror Film Hysteria (including X-certificate Epilepsy), Morbid Fear of Pony Tails, Detergent Blues, The Do-It-Yourself Staggers, Race Allergy, Françoise Sagan Poisoning, Brigitte Bardot Fever, Samuel Beckett's Disease, Coffee Bar Distemper, Skiffle Group Palsy, The Elvis Presley Plague and Galloping Atrophy of the Reading Muscles? Will our G.P.s have to learn to distinguish between common toothache and the Urge to Tear Up Cinema Seats? Will the next edition of Gray's *Anatomy* include diagrams of Knuckle-Duster Calluses and Enlarged Trigger-finger Joints? And must we all be taught First Aid for Nervous Debility on the Brink? Before I go down with a touch of Twentieth Century Depression, I pass the whole subject over to the *Lancet*.

How Green was my Chartreuse

IT is cheering to hear that among the best customers for liqueurs are the miners, not simply because it shows that a dangerous and unpleasant job is now being rewarded better but because it shows that the British working class is getting less insular. The delicate discriminations of the gourmet, the

experimental zeal of the œnophile are no longer to be found only among the idle rich, the parasites with palates. Drabness has stopped being a sign of respectability. Dull food and drink, dull clothes and houses were bad features of the past, like the high death-rate; but they still linger on in some areas of the country and in some strata of society. All honour to the miners for adventuring. May they soon equal the French working class in *douceur de vivre*.

No Loitering

ONCE in a Blue Moon a book appears that becomes a landmark in publishing. I am informed by the purveyors of "a completely New Dictionary specially compiled for this Atomic Age," and this is it. The circular asks how do you pronounce choctaw and do you know the meaning of scincoid, adding pertinently that questions like these are being asked constantly in every home and office. Almost I was persuaded to post, as requested, the Special Inspection Form, using the postage-free Business Reply Label, and put it to any test I wished and if I still didn't feel it was worth a place on my bookshelf simply return it to them, and owe nothing (I quote), when I was sharply pulled up by this warning: "You'll look and linger each time you pick up this fascinating New

modern dictionary." Far too often, already, I find my income-tax returns unreturned, replies to easily offended relations unwritten, while I alone sit lingering here, with *Roget*, the *Britannica*, *Wisden* and suchlike.

Figure of Speech

AN American fashion expert is quoted as saying, "When the bosom is snubbed the legs have it." He seems to have been talking about the way the Sack has been followed by tights; but his comment is pretty baffling even so. Fashion experts usually tell us that changes in the waistline or the hemline reflect large, general movements like Peace and Underconsumption and Feudalism. It is a shock to find one using the Pathetic Fallacy in this curious form. How far can the attribution of human reactions to anatomical features go? "Flatter the rump and the neck has had it" seems just as convincing. So, for that matter, does "Praise the waist and the knees are out."

Preserved

THE Government of Ghana's pressure on Opposition Parties is getting so successful that, to try to keep the forms of democracy alive, they are now having to refuse admittance to Opposition front-benchers who want to cross the floor. This is only the latest of the restrictions that are strangling mid-twentieth-century life. How unfettered and nomadic politicians used to be by comparison. When Sir Winston Churchill wanted to change parties he did not have to try to get on the quota or persuade the Secretary to put him up or find a Member to exchange with. He just upped and crossed. This unfeeling rejection of overtures is going to embitter Ghanaian politics when Opposition leaders, condemned for ever to be excluded, have to watch while Dr. Nkrumah takes the earlier batches of converts for cruises on his yacht.

Overheard in the Library

A SMALL elderly lady is speaking. "At one time I often used to find when I was half-way through a book that I had read it before, and that used to put me off it. But now I have a system. Before I return my book to the library I put a secret mark in it. I never make a mistake now."



"Which way did he go?"



Aspects of modern thought and behaviour

WESTERN APPROACHES : Patriotism



WHY ISN'T IT ENOUGH?

By DREW MIDDLETON

ONE way and another patriotism has taken a beating in this century. One indictment, Edith Cavell's that "patriotism is not enough," at least came from a woman acquainted with patriotism under stress. But many of the critics have been men like Bernard Shaw ("You'll never have a quiet world till you knock the patriotism out of the human race") and Thorsten Veblen ("Patriotism may be defined as a sense of partisan solidarity in respect of prestige") whose acquaintance with the practice of patriotism as applied to the average individual was somewhat sketchy.

The criticism of patriotism and the tendency to confuse it with nationalism and chauvinism has been accompanied by two vast reshuffles, after the first and second world wars, of sovereignty that have further clouded patriotism. In the 'thirties many people found patriotism a bore or out-moded. In the 'fifties many think it a dirty word.

This attitude is not confined to the United Kingdom. It is general in the Western world. This is a departure. In my boyhood in New York there were still veterans of the Army of the Potomac around who were not afraid to lay claim to the name of patriot. I often think how amused they would be at the metamorphosis that has taken place in American thinking about the Civil War. These veterans did not regard the war as a long-drawn World Series, as a gallant adventure or as a ghastly mistake, as do their descendants. They called it the War of the Rebellion, they were sure they had fought for worthwhile causes—the elimination of slavery and the salvation of the Union—and they had no doubt that they had whipped the rebels and that the rebels deserved to be whipped. Their patriotism had more to do with the backbone than the mouth. They had endured hardship and danger

and separation. Even in their nonage they were frequently and saltily disrespectful of the Regular Army and the mental currency of patriotism. But they were none the less sure that what they had done was a necessary and important thing.

One of my friends who reads all the reviews has informed me that the connection between patriotism and war is a deplorable one and that true patriotism should be apart from war. I have no doubt that to oppose war openly when a nation is infected with the virus takes a brand of courage of a high order. But to the majority patriotism is connected with the nation at times of grave and obvious peril, and although the minority may hoot at this as an outworn conception the rude fact is that it is to such patriotism that we owe the preservation of our liberties.

It has always struck me as odd that

the Left in this country and in the United States in its denigration of conventional patriotism has failed to understand the strength of that trait in the Soviet Union. Proportionately there are not a great many Communists in Russia; but there are a great many patriots who believe in Russia or in what they call "the Soviet power," and they, rather than the party officials, held the lines outside Moscow with deadly courage and launched the great counter-attack at Krivoi Rog. There is very little sense in denying ourselves a trait which is one of the strongest motivations among our rivals.

One reason for the attacks on patriotism in Britain may be that in a class society the middle and upper classes have treated patriotism as their private property. The great patriotic heroes of Britain as a rule are drawn from these classes; it is not surprising that working-class movements have always leaned heavily on internationalism. But in attacking patriotism the latter seem to me to be attempting to destroy first an emotion that has helped to assure them a minimum of interference in the pursuit of their plans in liberty, and second a trait that is dear to a large proportion of the nation.

I have seen too much of war and warriors to believe that the riflemen who halted the Germans at Calais or the pilots who blew the heart out of the Luftwaffe in the summer of 1940 went to battle reciting "England, My England." But only fools think that men can be led to fight as well as they did by





"Fancy people ringing up at this hour. They might have woken us up."

toys and slogans. I remember in France in 1940 a young fighter pilot who had chased a German across the Channel. He had, he said, had a look at England on his way back. How did it look, they asked in the mess. "Bloody good," he said. Translated this meant that it looked worth fighting for.

The critics of patriotism worry deeply about the imperfections of this world, and they are not backward in telling us about it. But I know many patriots who are also worried. Their visceral feeling, for they are not good at speeches, is that although the world may well be in a hell of a state, patriotism alone can provide a firm base from which the greater problems can be attacked. This is not a novel idea. Its importance rests in historical performance; the great tyrannies of the era of national state have been pulled down by

those who believed patriotically in their country and its mission. They can, of course, be drummed into battle by knaves. But recent experience shows us that the knaves work both sides of the street and are as quick to organize fools into protests against the guarantees of liberty as to inflame the citizenry against minor peoples.

Now the debaters of the Left will reason that in the present state of the world patriotism must be forgotten or sublimated into a loyalty to international organizations. Almost everyone would like to believe that an organization will some day be formed that will settle the differences of men and nations with an august impartiality. The history of the last thirteen years should show us that this time is not yet.

The concept of a supranational organization solving the world's quarrels and

rapping Nikita Sergeyevich on the knuckles when he starts to throw his weight around is an attractive one. If such an organization was in business now there might be some sense in the rather blind loyalty and faith in the United Nations that exists among many in this country and in the United States. But it is not in business; not as far as the Russians or the Egyptians are concerned. There does not seem to be much sense in transferring our national loyalties, our patriotism, to an organization to which one half of the world gives only lip service. Yes, yes, I know, the Chinese aren't in it and the Americans are keeping them out. Does anyone really believe that once the Chinese are in the United Nations they will respect the decisions of the Security Council or the General Assembly any more than do the Russians? And isn't there a good

chance that the United Nations would be as mealy-mouthed about a Chinese invasion of Nepal as they were about the Russian repression of the Hungarian rebellion?

A piece for *Punch* should be light-hearted. But for anyone who experienced the last war it is difficult to be light about patriotism.

I have often thought that the Angry Young Men must be chagrined at their inability to attack the second world war. Granted that war itself is a monstrous and cruel absurdity, that there were a number of moments when firmness on the part of the Western powers, including the United States, could have prevented the outbreak of the second world war, the war was fought against tyranny and for freedom. God knows it was fought with a full complement of incompetents, slackers and laggards, but it was fought. Those who

fought it and contributed to the victory have no reason to reproach themselves.

Not long ago I submitted this view to a group of American students at Oxford. Their answer was that they didn't think much of a war or a victory that merely led to another period of prolonged tension and the establishment of another group of powers hostile to the fundamental beliefs of most westerners. Well, no one guarantees us an easy passage through the world. None of us will ever know the serenity of the long, quiet week-end between 1815 and 1914—although I don't imagine the people at Shiloh or Rorke's Drift thought it was so quiet—and we are wasting time if we hanker for such security.

No, we are in for a time of troubles. It may be that when the going really gets rough we may find that patriotism is quite a useful thing to have around.

THE NEW BOOK OF SNOBS

IN 1846 *PUNCH* began the publication of Thackeray's "Book of Snobs." Snobbery has gained a lot of ground since then, and in the issue of October 22 there will appear the first of a new series, "The New Book of Snobs."

Contributors to the series will include:

PHILIP HOPE-WALLACE
SPIKE HUGHES
LORD KINROSS
THE REV. SIMON PHIPPS
E. S. TURNER
SIRIOL HUGH-JONES
JAMES LAVER
HENRY LONGHURST
ANN SCOTT-JAMES
STEPHEN POTTER
GEORGE SCHWARTZ
GWYN THOMAS
MACDONALD HASTINGS
PAUL REILLY

Modern Pentathletics

By H. F. ELLIS

A MATTER of two thousand six hundred and twenty years elapsed between the introduction of the Pentathlon into the Greek Olympic Games at the start of the Eighteenth Olympiad and its revival, in the form of a Modern Pentathlon, at

Stockholm in 1912. On this basis it may seem a little soon to call for a re-revival, or re-constitution rather, of the Pentathlon in a neo-modern form. But the brutal fact is that the world changes more rapidly now; the so-called Modern Pentathlon already wears an air of

antiquity hardly less marked than its ancient precursor.

Let us, in a week that witnesses the holding of the World Modern Pentathlon Championships (from October 13 to 17 in the Camberley and Aldershot district, for those interested), look more closely into this bizarre affair.

The Greeks, whose object was to find and crown the best all-round athlete, chose for their Pentathlon running, jumping, the javelin, the discus and wrestling. All these five events were completed in a single day and were accompanied by the music of flutes. Proficiency at the Pentathlon led, as may well be believed, to a harmonious development of the whole body; indeed, Aristotle says that those who practised it were the most physically perfect of all athletes. Whether Pausanias was right in saying that it was good for rheumatism is another matter.

These principles were not maintained when the Modern Pentathlon was devised. Nobody can say that all-round athleticism or physical perfection is proved or promoted by revolver shooting. The conception on which the present contest is based is, says Sir Brian Horrocks, President of the Modern Pentathlon Association of Great Britain and a past British champion, that of "a



"Take a letter to society..."



"How about 'More meals served,' or 'More drinking time,' or even 'Why all the frantic hurry?'"

courier carrying dispatches through a hostile country; he starts by riding a horse across country, but if unhappily he becomes dismounted he must then be able to continue his journey on foot—by running; as the bridges may be guarded he should be prepared to swim across any river encountered during his journey and, should the worst happen, he must be capable of defending his dispatches both with sword and pistol." The five events, therefore, are riding over fences, running $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles across country, swimming 330 yards, fencing with the épée, and revolver shooting. Five days, not one, are allotted for the completion of this contest.

This is decidedly unGreek, but not necessarily the worse for that. Just because the Greeks wanted to pick out their all-round athletes there is no reason why a competition should not be held for the benefit of the all-round good chap, the sort of man one would like to have with one in a tight corner—or, if preferred, the sort of man to carry dispatches through hostile territory. But I don't see that it can any longer be called "modern." In 1912, perhaps, yes. The Boer War was not all that far away.

Sherlock Holmes, without any special training save possibly in riding, could have taken the thing in his stride.* Couriers, for all I know, regularly carried swords as well as dispatches. But now, in 1958, what is the relevance of these Ruritanian achievements? Heroes may still usefully run and swim, as many an escaping prisoner of war found, and a pistol can come in handy at times; fencing and riding, I maintain, no longer meet the basic conception of the contest. A mounted courier would be spotted and apprehended, even in mildly hostile country, long before he had had time to fall off and prove his swordsmanship.

The Neo-modern Pentathlon I have in mind to take the place of these archaic exercises in make-believe recognizes the march of progress. The basic conception must be radically altered, there being little demand nowadays for couriers to carry dispatches through

hostile countries. What is wanted, it seems to me, is a series of events calculated to test a man's all-round ability to make his way in really modern conditions through a friendly country, carrying nothing but his wallet, brief case, umbrella, life insurance policy, National Health card and Super-annuation Scheme in duplicate. I see no reason why he should be pampered with a horse; he must use the means of transport normally provided.

Here, for consideration by a suitable sub-committee, are some suggestions for a neo-modern pentathlon.

Competitors must not be fit. There is no particular merit in performing a series of exercises when trained to a hair. It is their performance when fat and physically distressed that tests a man's courage, tenacity and endurance. Each competitor must, therefore, begin by eating a full breakfast at maximum

SPORTING PRINTS

Next Wednesday's issue will contain a Hewison portrait of STIRLING MOSS, the first of a fortnightly colour series of Sporting Prints.

*See, for running, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*; for swimming, *The Lion's Mane*; for swordsmanship, *A Study in Scarlet*; for revolver shooting, the wall opposite Holmes's armchair at 221B Baker Street.

speed before running half a mile in his overcoat on a stone or concrete track. He must then fight his way against all other competitors through a narrow entrance into a closed space of approximately the dimensions of a railway compartment, light a pipe and read a newspaper upside down with his arms pinned to his sides, all within twenty-five minutes. The sequence of events thereafter needs careful consideration, preferably by a suitable sub-committee. It will certainly include queue-jumping, car parking, a waiting-room endurance test and (because bus-strikes may occur even in friendly territory) a six-mile bicycle ride through fog. An escalator

race, porter control, and proficiency in the use of the umbrella for hailing taxis are other possibilities that spring to mind.

The ability to survive in modern conditions, as well as to move about, must also be tested if the revised Pentathlon is adequately to prove those qualities of nerve and sinew that go to make up the full citizen. Form-filling, tax-dodging, an I.Q. test after a heavy lunch, the manipulation of expense accounts, fencing with bank managers, line shooting—there are opportunities in plenty for splendidly keen competition by thoroughly unfit men. Indeed the chief problem facing the sub-committee

may well be the limitation of the contest to the statutorily appointed five events.

It might be better not to make the attempt. The introduction of a "Decathlon" into the Olympic Games (also in 1912) set a useful precedent. I have no objection myself to a neo-modern Pentekaidecathlon, or even a Pentecontkaidecathlon, if the sub-committee feel the need for it. The only stipulation I make is that all the events must be completed in a single day. There must be none of this effete fire-a-few-shots-and-take-the-rest-of-the-day-off attitude that seems to have been good enough for the couriers of 1912.

The Duke Holds Court

By CHARLES REID



IN the hotel lounge women with pearls and peach-coloured powder on their necks were drinking green drinks with men who looked like 1935 howitzer salesmen, that is to say, as if their beards (spirit-gummed, of course)

and spectacles were all in one piece. Eight floors up Duke Ellington moved about his penthouse in a polka-dotted shirt with heart-shaped cuff links in gold, a sack pullover and slacks of the sort I wear when painting the kitchen. Sometimes he put a porkpie hat on the back of his head, brim up all the way round. All it needed was a labor-union card stuck in the band to turn him into a waterfront labor (as distinct from labour) organizer.

At fifty-nine he moves with oiled hip-joints. His face, something between coffee and iron-grey, is lazy and crumpled and kind. The bags under his eyes are inverted musical pause marks. Watched from striped eau-de-nil walls by winsomely framed prints of Montgolfier balloons, steam coaches and frill-shirted beaux astride hobby horses, he breakfasted on a steak that overlapped the plate and a baked potato. Not all the potato, though. Gouging its inside out, he ate the skin only, soused in butter. Squeezing lemon into his black coffee, he rectified the gluttony legend.

Ma Wagner's toasted buns at Orchard Beach, Maine, comprised, so we read, a toasted bun, then a slice of onion, then a hamburger, then a tomato, then melted cheese, then another hamburger, then a slice of onion, more

cheese, more tomato and then the other side of the bun. Was it true the Duke ate *thirty-two* of these revolting cates in *one night*?

The Duke smiled a smile that ran brilliantly up his left cheek.

The formula as he remembered it was: he'd put two hamburger patties together as a core, sort of, and stack a hunk of cheese, also onion and tomato, on either side, adding toasted buns as the outer walls. He'd do that, no, not thirty-two times a night but, say, ten times.

"It's true I useta eat like a pig. I burn up a lotta energy. Two and a half years ago the doctor told me to take off 20 lb. I tore up the diet sheet he gave me and made up one of my own—steak, grapefruit and black-coffee-with-lemon three times a day. I took off 30 lb. in no time. I'm on that diet still. You become addicted."

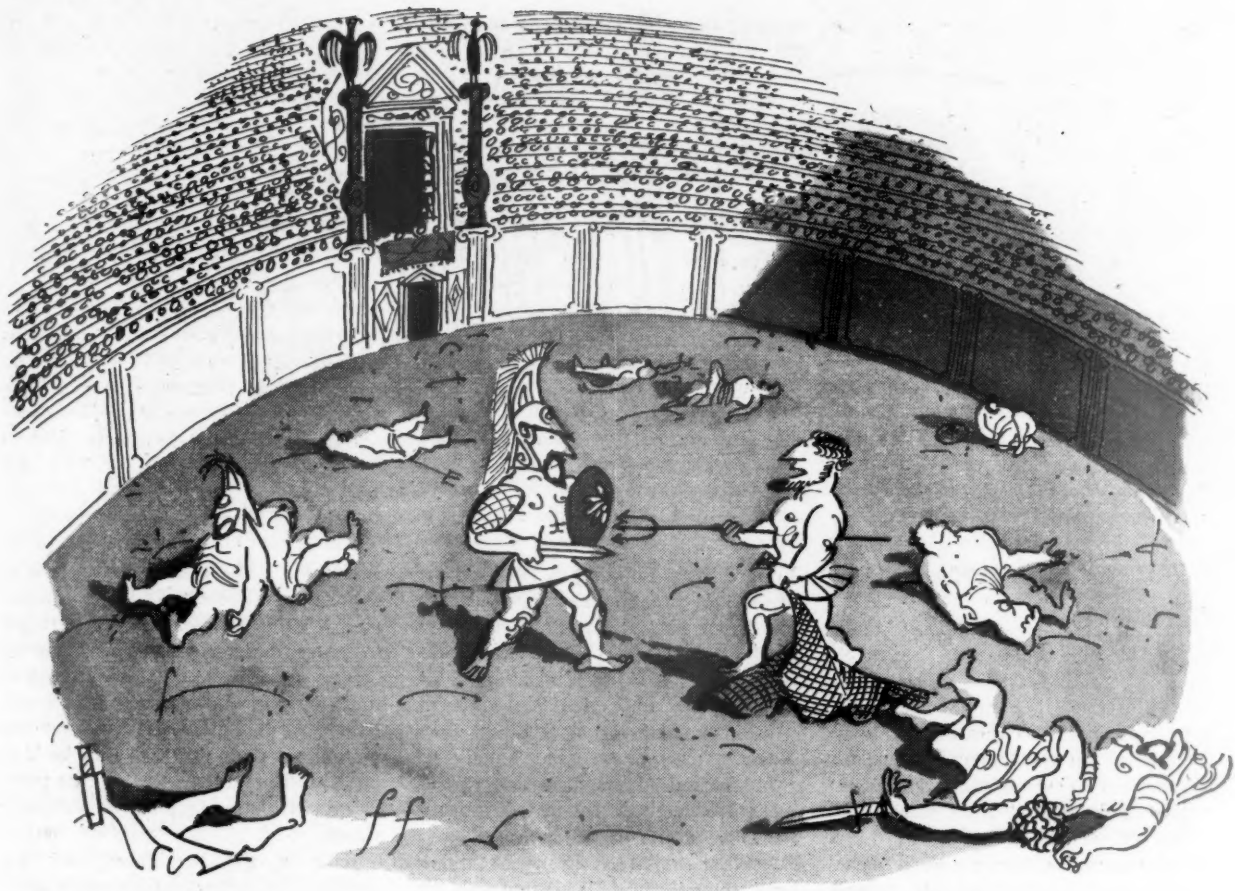
What was all this, I asked next, about his cataleptic tendency, his way of sleeping until five minutes before a concert and then being harder to waken up than a felled tree?

Again the slanting smile.

"I'll tell you something. We came over on the *Ile de France*. Ships aren't what they useta be. They lock up the ship's pianos at night nowadays. There's nothing to keep me on the hoof



"Now do you want to stick, or go for the next question?"



"I often regret the decline of the theatre, don't you?"

any more. So I go to bed. The *Ile de France* went through two hurricanes. Lot of rolling. I slept holding on. D'you know what? I made a discovery. A man can't sleep and hold on at the same time. Exhausting. Friends met me off the boat. *Thoughtful* friends. They built up a great tension and apprehension about this first concert of mine in England for twenty-five years. What a great big thing it was. What people expected me to do and what I mustn't do on any account and blah blah blah blah.

"After that I didn't have one quiet sleep. No real sleep for ten days. First night I went on the stage in a jitter. I'd have liked to take a tranquillizer. I knew I mustn't. On the stage I sorta hold the reins. To do that you have to keep your mind together. After the concert the usual party. Bed at three-thirty. At seven I was awake. Wide,

bright, stark, staring awake. Couldn't get off again. Even in the train to Nottingham sleep didn't come. True, I've just had ten hours to make up. But you can't really call me a cataleptic."

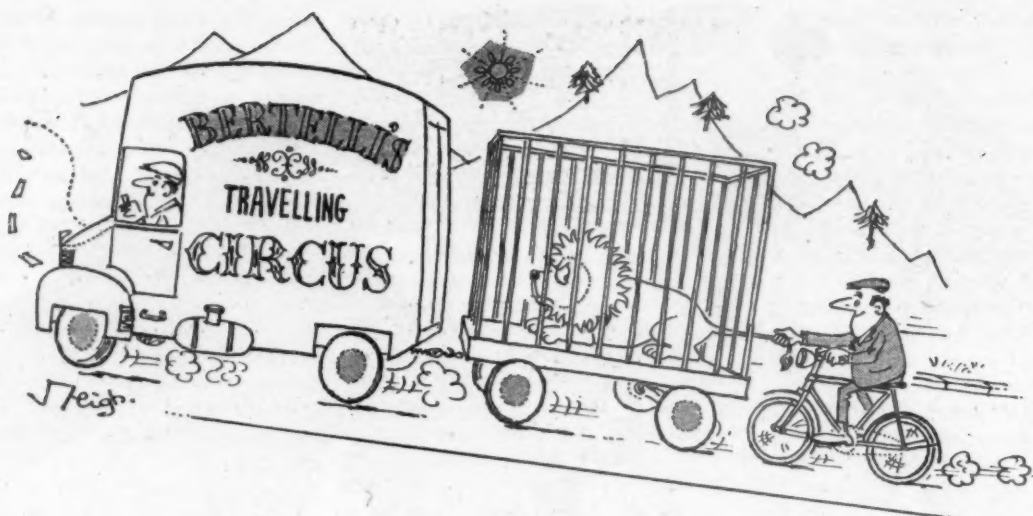
Suddenly the penthouse became populous and eventful. A man lugged half a hundredweight of recording machinery into the lobby. Pulling on his left earlobe, the Duke lolled back in a fireside chair in front of a radio interviewer who crouched and pressed his wrists together with enthusiasm. He told the Far East and Canada that if there are some people who like only the nostalgic side of his music then that's all right by him, so long as they *really* like it, because everything isn't for everybody.

Harry Carney, who has a cap in ivory plastic and holds a high note on the baritone sax so long that everybody's lungs burst but his own, plopped ice

cubes into four fingers of rye. A bland medicine ball of a man, he has played baritone sax for the Duke since 1927. "But," says somebody, putting his palm four feet from the carpet, "in 1927 you must have been only so big."

"Don't know about that," rumbles Carney. Holding his forefingers six inches apart he adds: "I do know I was only so wide."

A young Nubian with a gold collar-pin brings in a bottle of champagne with a red rose growing miraculously out of its cork. Present from an American woman writer. In five rooms five telephones ring at once. Each telephone has a luminous clock built into its dial so that nobody, even penthouse tenants, shall mistake time for eternity. One caller is Lieutenant-Colonel His Highness Sir Jaggadipendra Narayan Bhup Bahadur, Maharajah of Cooch Behar. "Why weren't you at the



concerti" the Duke challenges him genially.

Another caller is a publicity young lady. Her minuscule voice leaks from the Duke's earpiece. She thinks she is talking to the Duke's secretary. She quite understands the Duke is too busy to come to the telephone: he must be all gummed up with all these rehearsals.

The Duke says "What rehearsals? I don't know of any rehearsals. We never rehearse. Only time we rehearse is when there's something new coming into the book that needs a special tempo, a special mood, special treatment."

The minuscule voice asks "Who is that speaking?"

"This," says Duke Ellington, "is Duke Ellington."

"Oh!" exclaims the minuscule voice. The faint wail of ecstasy is followed by silence. The publicity young lady is assisted from telephone to sick bay in a semi-swoon.

The Duke eats another overlap steak. Then off to work.

On the job he sits in shadow at the keyboard, timing and moulding every page as it is played. He waves his soloists up front turn and turn about; gives them most of the spotlights and floods. His piano playing is nothing more than the small silver of the evening. It is others who handle the ingots, splash about in molten brass.

There is an incredible drummer, Sam Woodyard. Cymbals surround him like the rings of Saturn. He puts on a five-minute break that sounds like the

Empire State Building in collapse. It leaves him sweating and slumped over his drums like a Boat Race stroke on reaching Mortlake. There is a trombonist, Britt Woodman, who forces his trombone so high that it begins to whistle. "There is a trumpet, Ray Nance's, that whinnies like a horse.

As the music jabs, licks and rips at me I recollect this saying and that of the Duke earlier in the day.

"Whinnying isn't the natural thing for a trumpet to do. Whistling isn't the natural thing for a trombone to do. These things are personal to Ray and to Britt. These are the kinda things we write for, the things we build our numbers around. We write for the personal note, the personal accent, the personal gimmick."

A crowd of cameramen are suddenly let in. They run back and forth in jungle stoop before the low platform. Helmeted dispatch riders wait in the wings for their exposed plates.

A saxophone does something at his keys with a screwdriver. Three trumpets wave white wa-wa derby hats with scarlet brims in front of their instrument bells, then converse smilingly out of their mouth corners. A clarinet massages the lower joint of his thumb and stares with far-away eyes into the top gallery. Everybody is as relaxed as an impounded catapult. How come? Have they all been successfully psycho-analysed and psychiatrized? Or is it just that they believe in God as fervently as the Duke does?

"No," says the Duke, "the answer

is simpler. The answer is freedom of expression. They aren't here to please me. It's the other way round. I've got to prove myself to *them*. We bring players in because we enjoy listening to them. No replacements in this band. New guys don't have to do what the man before them did. All they have to do is be themselves. And all I do is try to provide a fitting platform for their wares."

Back in the penthouse, rose was uprooted from champagne cork. Champagne flowed. Somebody asked the Duke if he liked Stravinsky's music and Milhaud's as much as those guys are reputed to like his. Well, yes, he liked Stravinsky well enough, said the Duke, although he couldn't right now recall the names of the pieces he liked most. Whatever he heard of Stravinsky was marvellous if you got a real good performance, with all those highly mathematical equations just so, those equations which, if the slightest little note was off pitch, could destroy the whole thing, although, come to think of it, one note out of tune in a three-note cluster in his own music would destroy said music just as successfully.

The smile slanted and curled up the left cheek.

Most of his hair is wavy and raven black. Under strong light it is shot with coppery tints. The party went on. And on. From floor waiters to company directors with three Black Thunderbirds apiece, not to mention tunny-fishing leases off Florida, everybody adores him.

Boeing, Boeing . . .

By B. A. YOUNG

With all the superlatives used up on the Comet, what is going to be left for the maiden voyage of the Boeing 707?

AS I sit in this stylish, air-conditioned cabin, my portable typewriter on my knee, twenty-four-year-old blonde stewardess Carole Limburger at my elbow proffering vodka on the rocks as we sail effortlessly through the stratosphere at forty thousand feet and six hundred miles an hour, subject of course (in small print in the advertisements) to Government approval about the noise we make at Heathrow and Idlewild, I wonder what the hell to say that wasn't said on board Comet Delta Bravo on October 4.

Well, the cabin seems to be a good deal longer, and the seats are six abreast. Luckily I have an outside one. I can start like this—

I gaze down at the thread of silver which is the Thames as this great clipper of the air . . .

No, not quite. We all wrote about gazing down from the Comet. It helped to pass the time.

A hundred and forty-four mighty feet from search-radar to tail-fin, this superb greyhound of the skies . . .

In the Comet I balanced a coin on its edge. Most of my colleagues seemed to be doing it, and I thought perhaps it was a kind of ritual, like a "short snorter." My coin was a half-crown, and nothing the Comet did, or anything or anyone else did, for that matter, could dislodge it until finally twenty-eight-year-old blonde stewardess Barbara Jupp knocked it over with her sleeve. Perhaps I can improve on that—

Half-way across the Atlantic we feel a series of tiny tremors, hardly enough to disturb the pencil that I have balanced on its point on the table in front of me. "Feel that?" asks thirty-two-year-old second pilot Harold K. Gittleman, from Kansas, dropping into the seat beside me. "That was the wake from a flying saucer."

Britain—I shall have to work Britain in somewhere—may well be proud of this latest triumph of British aeronautical engineering.

What is the secret of the amazing success of the Boeing 707? I can tell you. At the efflux of each of the four mighty

turbo-jet engines is a cluster of Rolls-Royce-designed noise suppressors. It is this feature more than any other single factor which has enabled this magnificent airliner to ply without restriction between Idlewild Airport, New York, and London Airport. Once more British engineers are leading the world.

Across the aisle from where I am sitting I see U.S. columnist Deirdre Wayling. She was on the Comet. A lot of these passengers were on the Comet. This is the first fare-paying trip to be made by the Boeing 707, but an awful lot of newspapers seem to be willing to pay their reporters' fares. If I have correctly transcribed the shorthand in my notebook, Deirdre Wayling said last time "This is the first time I've flown in a Comet, but I don't suppose it will be the last. She's a honey."

Five hundred miles from New York, U.S. columnist Deirdre Wayling tells me "This is the first time I've flown in a Boeing 707, but I don't suppose it

will be the last. She certainly is the greatest."

Good old Deirdre, you can always rely on her.

Pretty twenty-nine-year-old brunette stewardess Peggy Horne was the one who gave me breakfast on board Delta Bravo, about thirty-three thousand feet up, as I remember, and some two hundred miles out of New York. We had cornflakes, bacon-and-eggs, coffee, and what B.O.A.C. always calls "basket of fresh fruit."

A special English-style breakfast had been prepared for the British passengers on the 707. Faultlessly served by twenty-four-year-old blonde stewardess Carole Limburger and pretty twenty-five-year-old blonde stewardess Hetty Broome, from Long Island (telephone Westport 714478), it consisted of cornflakes with sugar and fresh milk, bacon-and-eggs, delicious coffee, mounds of crisp golden toast and a fascinating basket piled high with fresh fruit.

Well, one does one's best. From my



"What do you suggest to educate his palate?"

luxurious seat I can see two hundred miles, or so the advertisement says; but at 600 m.p.h. we cover that distance in twenty minutes and it hardly seems worth while getting to know it really well. It is quite possible that we shall make a record time for the crossing.

A cheering crowd hundreds strong waited as the swept-wing giant taxied in

along the runway. Total time from take-off to touch-down, 7 hrs. 29 min.—fourteen minutes, or something, inside the existing record.

The U.S. Immigration Authorities were easily able to take up those fourteen minutes again, but we had made aviation history—subject to Government approval of course.

Borderline Case

A PEBBLE no bigger than a man's hand cast into the cloudy pool of Anglo-Russian relations has started a ripple that may yet turn into a maelstrom. Pebble-thrower is the author of a letter to the *Daily Telegraph* pointing out that Berwick-on-Tweed is still at war with Russia because no peace treaty was signed between the two powers at the end of the Crimean. *Anything* can happen.

Berwick's right to make its own arrangements with the enemy springs from the fact that it was declared a neutral territory in 1551, after all the misery of being buffered about between the English and Scots before the Union. The citizens took the "plague o' both your houses" line and wished no part of either. Thereafter Berwick was separately mentioned in Acts of Parliament, after Wales, though this distinction now survives only in certain royal proclamations.

The failure to come to terms with the Russkis may not have been a mere oversight, for Berwick has its peculiar reasons for not rushing into hastily-thrown-together peace treaties. It was captured, liberated, recaptured and so on so many times in the good old days that rival historians differ on the total score. Let's have a re-cap. It changed hands, according to one record, thirteen times between 1147 and 1182, by another reckoning eight times between 1174 and 1182. A Berwick man of this

period aged thirty-five (accepting the first calculation) could surely have been excused, whether or not his soul was dead, for not saying to himself with much fervour: "This is my own, my native land!" seeing that it had been Scotland and England alternately about every three years all through his life. Such a man was unlikely to have been caught singing in public the contemporary equivalents of "At hame in dear old Scotland with my ain folk" or "'Tis the star of the earth, deny it who can, the island home of an Englishman," nor was he or his descendant prone to pestering the blacksmith

for sword-into-ploughshare conversions prematurely. There is a down-to-the-ground realism, I will not say dourness, in the Northumbrian's character that makes him of all men the least liable to go riding on a rainbow to a new land far away on the flimsiest provocation. He knows, none better, that there shall be wars and rumours of wars and is prepared to accept rumours of peace with a well-cocked eyebrow. "All over in the Crimea, eh?" the canny Tweed-sider may well have said a hundred years ago. "That's what they said before, often enough, in the border affairs. We'll wait a bit and see how things settle down."

Take a look at the bell-tower next time you pass through Berwick. It was used to alarm the neighbourhood during border raids. It is in ruins. It has every right to be. Its bell must have been rung for several centuries with something like the frequency of an air raid siren during the doodlebug phase. That bell-tower is a bell-tower with a message: "Don't try to meet the millennium half-way."

LESLIE MARSH

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

(Letters addressed to the Editor, unless specifically marked otherwise, may be considered for publication.)

To the Editor of *Punch*

SIR,—As a nurse who has spent five days on night duty I find myself in disagreement with Bernard Hollowood's article on the joys of 5 a.m. in hospital.

The quiet solitude experienced by the only one awake in a peacefully sleeping ward is unhappily far too short.

How relaxing it is to sit at a desk instead of continually running to and fro at the beck and call of all and sundry. The blissful sounds of sleep are balmy after the chatter of the day, there are no bed-baths or meals to administer, and the patients are mostly unconscious to pain. No, happy is the night. At 5 a.m. the peace is broken. The light is blinding after the semi-darkness. The patients obviously sleep on—it is we who suffer. Once begun, the tumult of day never ceases until 10 p.m. I agree with the matron of St. George's Hospital—let sleeping dogs lie!

Yours sincerely,

J. MINIFIE

Whyteleafe, Surrey.

PERSONAL CHEQUES

To the Editor of *Punch*

SIR,—When talking of personal cheque accounts the author of "In the

500

City" refers to "banks," implying that more than one British bank has introduced this new service. In fact the personal cheque account is exclusive to the Midland Bank in Britain and no announcement has been made by any of the other banks concerning this type of service. Please forgive the criticism, but we know that, among its other wonderful attributes, *Punch* has a reputation for extreme accuracy.

Yours sincerely,

B. D. W. COX

Public Relations Dept.,
Midland Bank, Ltd.

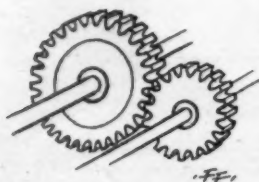
To the Editor of *Punch*

SIR,—Someone seems to have kidded Alex Atkinson ("By Rocking-chair Across America") that when leaving the Mersey for New York the chimneys of Clarence Dock Power Station belonged to Jacob's Biscuit Factory. But worse to come. I had always understood that starboard was the right-hand side of a ship. The cranes at the shipyards were slightly to port of astern, or sou' sou' west, but not starboard.

Yours sincerely,

H. W. CHRISTMAS

Prenton, Birkenhead



"Are you a believer in long engagements?"

Happy Warrior

By

J. B. BOOTHROYD

PARENTHOOD involves such sacrifices as spending the hottest afternoon of the year in an ice-rink. I accepted that. But after the boy had made two circuits without falling down I felt I could relax for a minute and look round for diversion. The choice wasn't wide. The other skaters were beginners too, and my ninepenny spectator's ticket, which had seemed cheap at the box-office, now plainly owed me something. "This ain't no build-up," sang Master Steele through a loud-speaker at my ear, accompanied by giant Jew's-harps in an echo chamber. This and the chilly emanations from the arena drove me round behind the tip-ups towards the hot-water pipes. It was darker there, and I stumbled over a small pile of rubbish, then over an old man crouched on his haunches.

I apologized.

"Got you!" said the old man triumphantly, and a battered ice-cream carton flew into the air. "They're dodgy," he said to my legs. "Them and mineral bottles."

"I bet," I said. Sympathy, I always find, is the key to open all conversations. My eyes were not yet fully accustomed to the gloom, but I should know what I was sympathizing about presently.

"Get a mineral wedged," said the old man, "and you can be"—he paused and grunted painfully, as if exerting pressure—"ten minutes. Got you."

A cigarette packet hit me lightly on the cheek, and he caught it as it fell, adding it to the pile. By this time I was able to see the nature of his work. He was inserting a stick between the divisions of a long radiator and shooting up the rubbish out of the back.

It seemed to me a hard life, and I said so.

"What's hard about it?" he said. His voice had a tinge of huffiness.

I said "Aren't there any litter baskets?"

"Twelve. Very well equipped we are here."

"Why don't they use them?"

"They do use them." He gave me a

slight bang on the knee. "Do you mind, guv? I'm on to something here. Touch it. Can't move it." I apologized again, and shifted slightly. He probed carefully, then sat back. "That's what that is," he said.

"What is it?"

"Get one of them at an angle, might be all day. Of course, they're new—lolly-sticks. Come in with rock 'n' roll, you might say. Perfect fit, they are. Wedge back of the flangels."

"Of the what?"

"What they call the flangels, stick out the back. Trouble is, can't see 'em. Have a look from your end, guv, while I shine my flashlight."

"I can see a bit of comb," I said, the

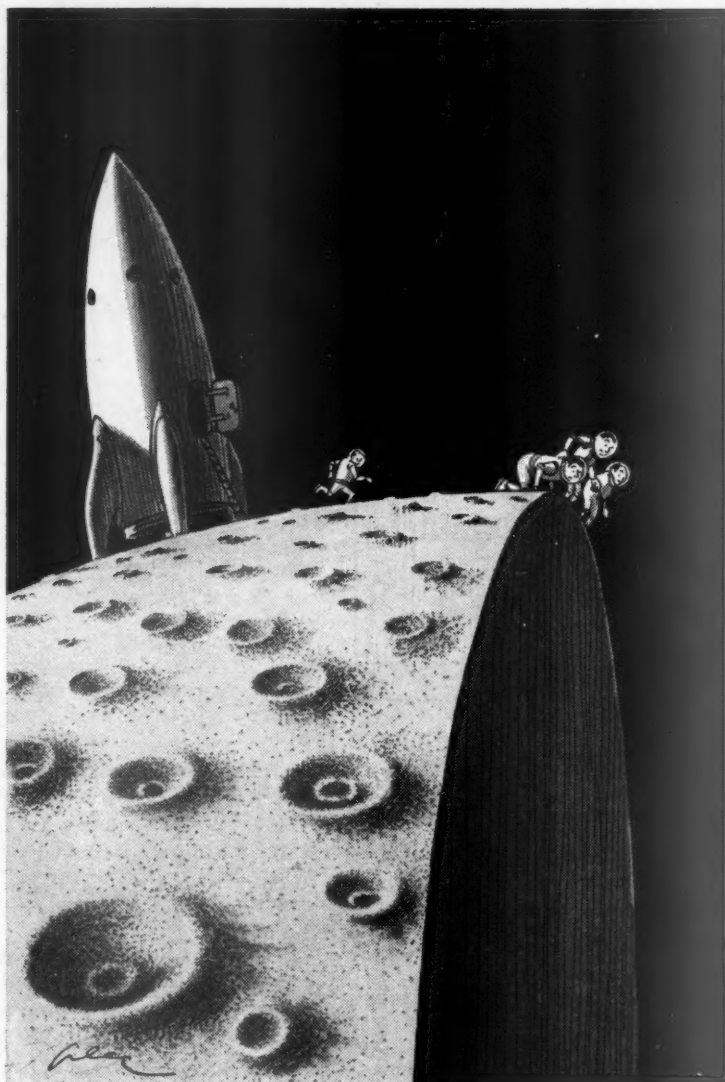
wall comfortably warm to my right ear. He said he knew all about that, hadn't got there yet. Then I spotted it. "Up a bit and to the left," I told him. "Now!" The little stick flew up. I caught it and put it on the heap.

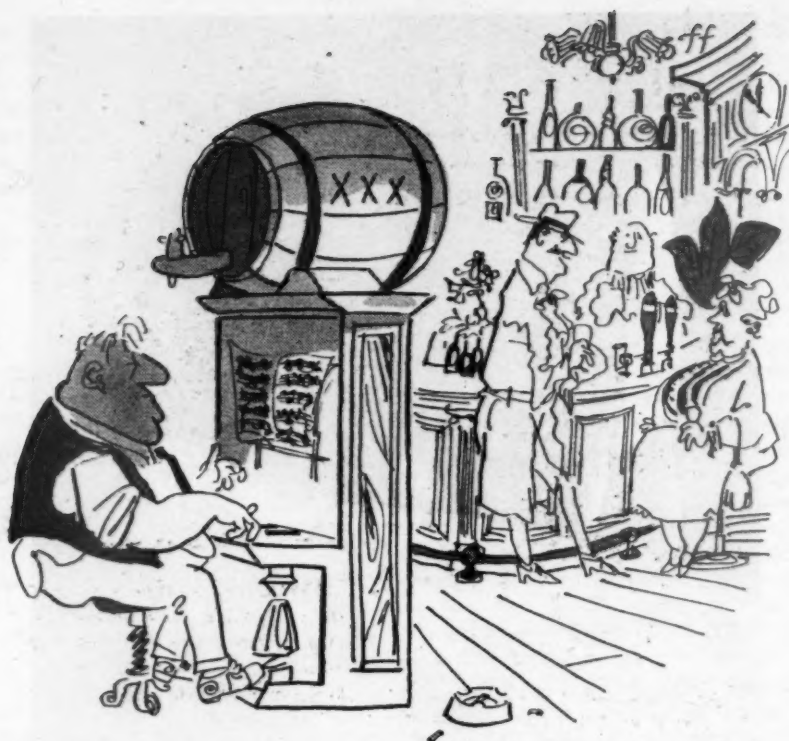
"Good," said the old man. "Very good." I may have felt my chest swell a little. "Of course, you're lucky. Thin-faced. Very wide forehead, I've got. Told 'em when they put these radiators in, 'No good to me,' I said, 'Too close to the wall; can't get my eye behind, being so wide in the forehead.' Look out, fag-packet coming."

"Don't you get fed up?"

"What of?"

"Of all the kids shoving rubbish down





behind the radiators for you to shove up again."

He strained in silence for a moment or two and there was a thump behind. "Your end," he said. "Torch battery. Get all sorts."

"There you are," I said. "What do they want to push torch batteries down for?"

"They're down there, aren't they?" he said.

"That's what I'm saying."

"Well, then."

By accident or design someone in the control-room turned the music up. It raved for half a chorus, a maelstrom of shouting and guitars. Then it faded again.

"... all wafers and cornets *then*," he was saying. "What you'd say fully edible. But there. Cartons is beggars to get out, but they're progress."

"What are you on to now?" I said. He'd got the stick and half his arm up the back from below, a position of some discomfort.

"Contact," he said.

"But what with?"

"Shot it up once, fell down and stuck. Lady's contact, powder and puff. It'll have to be—" Concentration made him dumb. Then a little plastic flap-

jack rolled out on to my boot. I put it on the pile and he took it off again.

"That's where it's interesting. Lost property for that one. Have to decide."

"What about the bit of comb?" I said, adding hurriedly "When you get there."

"Can't say yet," said the old man. "Have to decide. Left to my discretion, see?" He picked up the flapjack and turned it over, put it on the pile,

savoured it, took it off again. "Could make it rubbish if I liked," he said. "But it's lost property. I've decided. Have a look while I shine my light, guv. Is that a mineral at the end, or a pencil-box?"

"A what?"

"They come here straight from school some days."

It looked to me like a tin of lighter-fuel, but before I could say so the boy came along and fell over my leg. He was carrying his skates and eating a lolly. "Didn't you say go home at five?" he said.

"Is it five?"

"Yes." He finished the lolly and held out the stick. "What shall I do with this?"

"Give it to me," I said, "and go and wait in the car."

The old man was deeply engrossed with the tin of lighter-fuel. I dropped the stick down the next division. I hope it came up to standard. When I offer my sympathy freely, in conversation with monsters of complacency, I can at least *try* to give it something to bite on.

☆

"I draw attention to a remarkable trend in British publishing. The trend towards the smothering of British books . . . Take the firm owned and run by Victor Gollancz. The idealistic Mr. Gollancz has often spoken out sonorously against American political ideas. But the American titles on his fiction list outnumber British novels by two to one . . ."—*Sunday Express*

Perhaps they speak out sonorously against American political ideas?

Say It With Flowers

Stoke Mandeville, on the Metropolitan Line, has been awarded first prize in a contest for station gardens.

THOSE who have waited and contemplated the doors of Basingstoke buffet (When trying to make a connection (in the direction, say, of Reading From Winchester City) deserve the pity of regular passengers using Stoke Mandeville's wonderful station, imitations of which are spreading.

Though London Transport currently can sport the champion gardener, colleagues Will follow his floral example: there is ample scope for a legion Of railway folks in the other Stokes—in d'Abernon (Southern) and Golding (Midland) and Gifford or Canon for the man on the Western Region.

The gardening movement could mean an improvement at termini: would it be fair, though,

If station announcers persisted (having listed the trains that are leaving) In loudly booming "The plant now blooming on Platform Twelve is *Vitalba*" When Travellers' Joy's an ambition the Commission just isn't achieving?

ANTHONY BRODE

FOUL PLAY SUSPECTED

Further evidence on sportsmanship
submitted to the Football Association

By BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



"The home team tried to make out that I'd flagged for offside, but actually it was my blazer flapping."—Linesman F. R. Croop of Chelsea



"They said I was goal-shy, 'wouldn't shoot. But I had my future to think of, and I'd seen too many ugly incidents when goal-scorers were being congratulated by their colleagues."—Centre-forward Ned Hackett of Sunderland



"The trainer rushed on to the field with a sponge soaked in blood, wiped it all over the prostrate inside-left, and appealed violently for a penalty."—Referee Ted Clough of Port Vale



"That isn't the way you kissed your centre-forward when he netted from your through-pass!"—Mrs. Joe Bradder of Bolton



"I decided to take the offender's name. 'Your name?' I said. 'Come off it,' he said. 'Everybody knows me. I cost £35,000 and appeared in a Wilfred Pickles show.' 'Your name,' I said, 'or I shall have to send you off.' 'I'm John Foster Dulles,' he said."—Referee H. Whatkin of West Bromwich



"I thought the first rule was never to point it at anybody."

India is Not What It Was

By D. F. KARAKA

INDIANS don't sit on spikes any more. Spikes seem to have gone out of fashion in India since Independence. Even the billion-pound Tata steelworks have turned their attention to the manufacture of other more easily saleable goods: rails, girders, steel plates.

Mr. Nehru is largely responsible for these new trends in fashion. He is modernizing the country at an incredible pace. The very first day he became Prime Minister of India he arrived at the P.M.'s Secretariat in a high-powered limousine instead of a bullock cart. Because it was an American car from the old Viceregal garage he decreed that there should be no strings

attached. He has to use British and American cars because the Russians have not yet presented him with a Rabblewaggon. In fact they have not given him anything very much except a private plane and the blue-prints of a collective farm.

Spikes, they say, used to help the Indians to think. Thought needs concentration. In the days of the old British raj, spikes provided stimulation. Nowadays the Indians have become much too thick-skinned and spikes don't work. It used to be all right when India's political philosophy was based on passive resistance. Now there is a

new dynamic approach, a different outlook. You cannot fulfil a Five Year Plan on a five-point spike.

Mr. Nehru has, therefore, rightly cut spikes out.

Now that is not the only misconception which people in Britain have about India. In South Kensington the other day an intelligent Englishwoman asked me if I did the rope-trick. She said she did not believe it could be done, and if I said I could do it would I show her.

I said "Madam, Indians don't have to do the rope-trick any more."

I explained that the idea of the rope-trick was purely a figment of British imperialist imagination. It was a sort of challenge to the Indian—an unfair

challenge. If the poor bloke could not do it he would feel he had an inferiority complex, which was exactly what the British wanted.

But nowadays there is no need for the Indian to prove he is equal. He is every bit as good as the American, the British, the French and even the Egyptian. At the United Nations Mr. Krishna Menon has talked out Sir Pierson Dixon many a time. So why do we have to prove our mettle by doing the rope-trick? The lady in South Kensington understood.

Now there is another misconception—that all Indians are always hungry. In the days of the old raj the British deliberately kept the Indians on low-caloried diets. It was based on the mistaken belief that low calories produced low passive resistance.

The Indian national leaders soon put this right. Each time Mr. Nehru spoke on Chowpatty sands in Bombay a hundred thousand hungry Indians were charged with patriotism. Now that the British have gone we have no more food problems. We can easily borrow from abroad.

There have been other experiments tried to make ourselves self-sufficient in food. We tried out Japanese ways of rice cultivation, Australian dairy methods, Soviet systems of procurement, marketing and distribution; but in the end we have found it easier to borrow from Canada and the U.S., and it helps out with their over-production problems.

There is also a misconception that there is prohibition in India. Admittedly there are irksome liquor laws in some States of the Indian Union, but, as in all cases of regimentation, man and nature contrive to find a way out.

According to these liquor laws a foreigner (to India) is entitled to four units. He gets a permit to that effect on presentation of his passport. When he goes into a licensed bar he produces his permit, calls for a scotch-and-soda and gets it duly chalked up on his permit — $\frac{1}{2}$ of a unit gone. Balance: $3\frac{3}{4}$ units left. This balance is entered on the permit by the barman, countersigned by the hotel accountant on behalf of the licensee under the supervision of the Excise inspector on the spot, who represents the government. So what's so difficult about that?

The Indian has a little more difficulty

in getting a drink. He can get a permit only on health grounds. Periodically he has to go to the Prohibition Medical Board and state his ailments—insomnia, loss of appetite, nervous tension, as the diagnosis of his family physician may be. The R.M.O. (Resident Medical Officer) takes his blood-pressure, a peon takes the weight, and in a few days the Indian applicant gets his Health Permit. Usually for two units. Of course most residents don't have time for all this. They cut out the red tape, just calling up their bootlegger. If they are honest with their government they just ask for two units so that at least the spirit of the prohibition laws is maintained.

Social life in India, therefore, is much the same as life anywhere else, with the added attraction that you don't have to depend on a daily help to wash up the next day. It is also a misconception that Indian servants are treated like the old Roman slaves just because they don't get a TV set of their own. There is no TV to watch in the first place—and in any case my bearer much prefers his poker game, after serving dinner, in the garage below.

Oh yes, they play poker in India nowadays. What's more they play it

well—as they do any game of bluff. You've got to get rid of the idea that most Indians are poor and have to walk, and the few who are rich ride elephants. Everyone in India is riding a high horse now. Mr. Nehru started the fashion.

Useful Art

I AM a devotee of all the arts; No negligible portion of my salary Floats from my pocket wallet and departs In bookshop, concert hall and picture gallery.

And yet for three years past upon my estival

Vacations I have proved beyond conjecture

That neither music, drama, civic festival Afford me such delight as Architecture.

What symphony, what sculpture ever gave

Such benison as Canterbury's nave? What poetry, what painting can aspire To Ely's octagon or Lincoln's choir? What art, in short, can be so mood-evoking

And at the same time save one from a soaking? E. V. MILNER



"Sometimes I wonder what they're all for."

Getting to Know my Med

By JO PACKER

IN Paris our hostess seemed quite normal until Jean and I mentioned that we intended to hitch-hike to the Riviera. Then she became as excitable as a manic-depressive on the up-beat. Thrusting the *Paris Soir* at us, she commanded us to "look at the hundreds of cases." On French highways, it appeared, male behaviour hit a new low. "They will take you to an hotel," she predicted, "and put something in your drink to make you sleep. When you wake up you will be in South America." She had not spent her youth reading Phillips Oppenheim for nothing.

"You think you are smart, but let me tell you," she called after us as we waved good-bye, "they know it all, these men!" Certainly the Englishman who obliged with a lift over the French Alps admitted that he knew some of it. "Oh, yes, I know my Med," he said complacently, and proceeded to put us to sleep with an account of his travels. We hoped he knew his Route Soleil, too, lest our blood should stain the saxifrage as we swerved down the helter-skelter highway. Fortunately the only things we hit were our ears, glugging

a cartoon for those unable to read. "Do Not Let Your Dog Loose and Cause an Inconvenience to the Tents," we read on the palm in our small corner.

On our third day at the camp Jean announced that she had met a German in the wash-basins and had promised to go to a fiesta with him. So I rolled up my belongings in the sleeping-bag and set off for Monaco, arranging to meet Jean there later. Nice stopped following me after an hour's walk along the coast road. The highway grew tiresome, weaving among villas and bougain-villaeas, Capes and grapes. Soon I was creeping like a vine myself, what with the heat and the luggage. At last a car slowed down. By the time it had stopped I was sitting inside.

The middle-aged Frenchman behind the wheel, dressed in what I believe are called carefully casual clothes, had a pronounced military bearing. He told me in good English that he lived in Nice and promptly invited me to join him for a bath near by. I wondered what my Paris hostess would have said about this technique, but when the car stopped near the sea I realized that "bathe" was the word he should have used, and that

I had actually taken part in what would have been a good joke in an early British film.

My swimsuit was wrapped in the sleeping-bag. As I grabbed the whole bundle my companion looked momentarily agitated; obviously we were going to a very classy place. It was a small, exclusive beach where one had to pay to gain admittance and again to use the changing huts. People, lying on foam rubber under Neapolitan parasols, littered the stretch of sand. My patron had his second shock when I announced that I could not swim. "I thought all English girls were *très sportive!*" he cried.

Cementing the entente my host insisted on driving me to a camp on Cap Ferrat, which he said was the last until I got to Monaco. I had not the heart to tell him that five o'clock in the afternoon was too soon to get bedded down, or he would have insisted on driving me on to Monaco. So with thanks in school-girl French I left him at the camp entrance, waited until he was out of sight on his way back to Nice, and then pressed on.

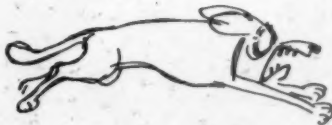
Beyond Beaulieu a dark, handsome youth on a motor-scooter pulled up and introduced himself as Amanry. He had a radiantly simple aura and spoke a strange glibble, so I placed him as a primitive Italian peasant, knowing we were not far from the border. We tore along the coast road, leaning over professionally at all the bends, and shouting



madly in the high altitude like bath-pipes.

L'Idéal Camp at Nice, every tent a brilliant orange, looked like a sun-worshippers' convention. We knew at once that there were no British there, for abroad we are labelled by our green tents. Jean and I lacked even these national symbols. We crept into a corner of the field and unrolled our Army and Navy Surplus sleeping-bags.

The camp was thick with palms, but the beauty of the scene was spoilt by warning notices, signed by the proprietor, nailed to each trunk. He admonished us in three languages plus



hopefully to each other in basic French. On learning that I intended to stay at a camp he yelled into the wind: "*Voulez-vous rester à moi?*" No doubt my Paris hostess would have advised me to jump off the pillion even at that speed, but thinking I might be taken into the bosom of his family, always a favourite scene of mine on the films, I said yes.

A mountain road off the main route took us higher and higher until Monaco was hundreds of feet below. Amanry stopped where the Alp rose almost sheer from the roadside, and parked his scooter under a bush. We started to scale the mountain. There was no proper path, only a few strategic rocks and some clumps of grass to grab. I grimped up after him, thankful that my gym shoes, though non-sexy, were also non-slip. Eventually we reached a vegetable plot which, as the geography primers say, had been scratched out of the bare hillside. Beyond it was a small house.

I was looking forward to meeting Amanry's family; the philosophic grandfather who tried to lure everybody into playing a game of draughts with him, the wastrel uncle who grabbed his shotgun whenever he fell into a rage, the mother with fat forearms who did nothing but carry steaming platters of food to the table. "Will your parents be glad to see me?" I asked. He gave me a blank look. "What parents?" he said. "I live here with my cousin Zozo. That's all."

The inside of the house was in darkness, or so it appeared from the outside, for all the shutters were closed and padlocked. In the kitchen cousin Zozo sat under a yellow paraffin-lamp. Was it the light, I wondered, or was every single thing in the room really coated in black? Then the smell hit me; the kind of smell that goes with things coated in black smuts.

Eventually the first course, spaghetti

boiled in a saucepan with chopped onion, found its way to the newspaper-covered table. The water was not drained off but served as gravy. Spoons and forks looked as though they had just been washed up from a shipwreck. I ate the offering hoping the next would not be so watery; it wasn't, it was oily. Chopped hard-boiled eggs with tomatoes squelching in oil. Then shredded lettuce similarly treated. I ate plenty of bread to act as an internal blotter. Grapes, black coffee and cream biscuits followed.

After such a blow-out I felt like bed. I said I would sleep in the garden, but this was not seriously considered and I was taken to the only bedroom in the house, which contained a double and a single bed. I bagged the single with such obvious haste that my hosts assured me there was no need to worry; they were going to meet a certain *garçon* in a bistro. Amanry went to a mouldy cupboard, took out a bottle of perfume and shook it with great abandon all over the room.

I settled down under the coverlet, wondering how the two of them would negotiate the mountain in the darkness. I listened for shrieks which would hang in the air as they fell to their doom over the precipice, but all I could hear was the faint playing of a band in Monaco. Then the invasion of The Things began.

They came from beneath the bedclothes, quickly reached skin level in spite of the fact that I was wearing all my clothes, and crawled all over me. They tickled and itched and irritated. I leapt up, scratched wildly for ten seconds, sprang into my sleeping-bag and lay down again. All was quiet for a few minutes, then, after sizing up the situation, they attacked again, making a joke of the thick sleeping-bag and a maniac of me. I was about to rush demented into the garden when Zozo returned.

I lay perfectly still. After wandering



about the room a bit he crawled on to my bed and started whispering things in Italian in an effort to wake me up. Under my eyelashes I could see his *retroussé* nose quite close; it was like looking into the muzzle of a double-barrelled shotgun. I gave an excellent imitation of one in profound sleep and he grew discouraged. Eventually he went to his own bed and slept. Amanry did not come back that night.

I lay awake all night, and when dawn came rose stealthily and sneaked out of the room. I descended the concrete stairs with elaborate silence lest Zozo should hear me, follow, and try to persuade me to see the light. The only light I wanted to see was that outside the back door.

But having parted from Zozo I fell foul of another of his breed in Monaco, a pedestrian who followed me around and got close enough on two occasions to pinch me in the place where they pinch pretty girls in Paris. I had no idea until then that the custom had spread so far south. The second time his pincers nipped me I swung my fist into his chest. It actually landed there and he actually went away.

Jean and I made our separate ways back to Paris. She did it in four lifts, but I took more than twenty. I noticed very soon that my drivers began to fidget uncomfortably after a few miles. Then they would stop and say that was as far as they were going. I got out with relief, for it's not very ladylike to scratch oneself in a strange car. And it proved to me quite clearly that bugs are the answer to the white slave traffic. Phillips Oppenheim never thought of that.



FOR
WOMEN

Felix qui non Potuit

THIS year I know better. This year the Prospectus from the local Technical Institute dropped unopened into the w.p.b. This year I am that contented, relaxed creature, the Mum who can't!

I have not arrived at this happy state overnight; in fact it has taken years of frustration and effort to achieve. For years I cherished the vision of myself as the talented wife and Mum; the Little Woman about whom my husband could boast with modest pride: "My wife's new play opens in the West End next week." Or "I must dash off now to my wife's recital at the Festival Hall"—or to the private view, or the literary luncheon: I was prepared to be quite catholic in my abilities. But alas for my cultural ambitions! I am practically-tone deaf, so the concert hall was out. As I can't even draw toothpick figures to my children's satisfaction, Burlington House scarcely merited a passing thought, so literary fame seemed the obvious choice.

At first I was quite modest about my untrained abilities. I paid 12/6d. for a term's lectures on Freelance Journalism and Short Story Writing, but two lectures showed me beyond doubt that this was not for me. Obviously the course was designed to develop a pedestrian talent, content with grubbing a guinea here, a guinea there. For me the untrammelled flow of genius, which would produce the Book of the Month, the best seller of the year, to become the super colossal, CinemaScope, Vista-Vision star-studded film of the year after next. All I needed to do was to write 3,000—well, say 2,000—words a night, and in a little over a month it would be done.

I bought a pile of ruled exercise books and a ball-point pen, and gave myself up to inspiration. For two nights genius burnt hotly, the words flowed freely. On the third there was an interesting play on television, then we had friends to stay, then the children all had measles one after the other, the char left and the cat had kittens. When I finally unearthed and re-read the manuscript I was astonished to find what rubbish it had become. In any case the children had by now broken the ball-point pen filling the other exercise books with lively pictures of train-crashes. Thus ended my literary career.

Pottery was my next bright hope, but when I had dislocated my thumb in the interests of a shapeless, sideways sagging mass, even the instructor felt that perhaps my true bent was Continental Cookery.



I should have known better, of course, since my jams never jell, and my sponges droop, but I imagined my husband's friends demanding of their wives "Why can't you make zabaglione like this? It's out of this world." Alas! it was, and I was soon out of the class.

Undaunted I turned to Foreign Languages. Perhaps I could be one of those awe-inspiring women one sees on holidays abroad, reading the local papers and arguing with the shopkeepers. French and German had lost their charm for me at school, but what about Italian, or Russian? But all those Cs and Zs and funny upside-down letters put me off Russian, and the Italians don't pronounce their language the way anyone with a grounding of school-girl French knows they should.

Dressmaking? Even the W.I. jumble stall declined my home-made offerings.

Flower Arrangement? The flowers developed a fiendish life of their own, and sneered at my efforts with pinholders, crumpled chicken-wire, string and glue. I did once achieve a moderate success with a Plasticine base, but the resultant tantrum lasted an hour, and in the end I had to fish it out and hand it back.

Interior Decorating, Archaeology for Beginners, Dress Design and Comparative Religion all had their day; all ideally suited to express somebody's ego, never mine. So at last I have abandoned ambition. I rest in a nest created by other hands than mine, and pityingly watch the career wives, wearing themselves to a creative frazzle and being marvellous Mummies too.

No, I haven't written a best seller, been hung on the line, directed a film, designed a wall-paper, baked a bigger cake or even built a better mouse-trap. I'm the Mum who can't. And it's so restful.

MARJORY JOHNSTONE

☆

Great Expectations

DEAR MR. PRINCE,—It was a great pleasure and privilege to be at your Wine Tastings in the Lebègue cellars last week—those Tastings which, in the words of *La Journée Vinicole*, "se déroulent chaque année avec un luxe et une prodigalité extraordinaires"—and I should like to comment on your elegant treatise, THE FUTURE OF EXPECTORATION.

In the foreword you say "I do not write facetiously, for the subject is neither funny nor vulgar"; but you follow with a pun that is bad enough to have come out of a century-old *Punch*: "If at these Tastings you expect to rate highly, madame, you must learn to expectorate." Mr. Prince,

honoured Vintner, you may have the best cellar in London, but that is no way to *write* a best seller. Is it women, or is it wine, that brings out the worst in men? On the next page Mr. Harry Yoxall, dispenser of good taste through his *Vogue* publications, takes THE HAUTE COUTURE OF SPITWEAR as his subject, saying he does not want to be a *crache*-ing bore but with the advice in this booklet "the privileged female visitor *chez* Lebègue should now have no difficulty about getting her spitniks into orbit." Niks? . . . if by this Mr. Yoxall means we should wear Bloomer costume, it would not be in the best of taste, since Mrs. Bloomer crusaded for temperance as well as dress reform.

For myself, this being the third year Lebègues have extended their hospitality to ladies, I have perfected my style and have no need for special spitniks; my Vernier *crache* helmet was worn not as a safety measure but as a compliment to the occasion. If I showed rather more *savoir faire* at the Tastings than some it is because I learnt to spit at my public school. When it was too wet for outdoor sports, one of our indoor pastimes was to go up to the top floor and aim down the well of the staircase to a target placed at the bottom. I became adept at scoring the equivalent of a double-twenty. If only they had taught us about *wine* in those formative years! You do quite right, Mr. Prince, to set out to educate women—thirsty for knowledge we will swallow anything you offer us. But no, of course not! We will savour the bouquet, roll it around our taste buds, and spit it out.

Best wishes for your further education of women—the world is too full of *femmes ordinaires*.

ALISON ADBURGHAM

POSTSPIT.—Ever since last week my taste-buds have been in full bloom.

☆

"I am neither a prude nor a Puritan but I think the way some girls are dressing in London this summer weather is absolutely shocking. As a happily married man it doesn't worry me personally but I have seen adolescent boys fairly goggling at the amount of bosom these girls are flaunting . . . It just isn't fair for girls to throw sex about in this abandoned way . . . Many men have plenty of difficulty in leading a disciplined life without being thrown off their balance by shameless young women . . ."

Letter to The Star

Glad to see it doesn't worry you personally.

Hostess with the Leastest

AS a prelude to an easy, elegant day —what more delightful, more privately feminine, than breakfast in bed? . . . Aromatic coffee, a croissant, a peach fresh-peeled from the sun-soaked wall, a posy of sweet-smelling rose-buds. *Lay tray the night before. Up at five-thirty. Put croissants in oven. Give baby six o'clock feed. Down again for croissants and to make coffee. Breakfast in bed. Up again at eight to get husband's breakfast.*

Later in the day, nothing compares with the pleasure of the well-chosen party of four for an informal luncheon. The spacious dining-room, cool with Venetian blinds, arranged for a simple meal . . . light-as-a-feather lace mats contrasting the solid importance of Victorian silver and a subtle display of autumnal flowers. *Unstitch the laundry-marks from the napkins and find the chicken wire for the flowers. Polish silver. Lay odd spoon, glass, and table mat for self.* The menu—your own blend of sophisticated country simplicity—cold vichyssoise with ice-cold wine, saddle of lamb, chocolate soufflé.

Prepare baby's carrots while guests eat and meal must be over by two for baby's feed.

In the evening, a long-to-be-remembered dinner. The numbers paired off intimately at tables for two dotted about the room will give a revitalized sense of space. Card tables are ideal . . . *As we don't have whist drives, must use nests of tables. Hope nobody notices they get progressively smaller and lower.* The menu—crevette cocktail, veal, asparagus and, as a final folly, zabaglione. *At last a use for that miniature bottle of brandy, but must skip asparagus to cook zabaglione and wash up crevette glasses to serve it in.* For this extravagant evening, wear something luminously pale but lavishly embroidered, floating into suggested fullness at the back. *Alternative, if baby is sick down dress during feed: my green corduroy.* The considerate hostess will supply hangers with longer-than-usual hooks for fur coats. *Must turn the*

deck-chairs, galoshes, old car seat, mandolin, out-of-date telephone books and pram out of coat cupboard.

After the guests depart, relax into a perfumed bath for that easeful feeling at the end of the day and give yourself that longed-for beauty check-over . . . *Before bath, clear and replace tables, wash up, give baby ten o'clock at midnight, boil baby's milk for six o'clock and wait for water to reheat after washing up. Put nappies to soak. Sink into your vitally necessary, complexion-refreshing, pore-cleansing sleep—to be ready for yet another easy, elegant day . . .*

PHOEBE WINCH

☆

Bedtime Story

OVER the set the sleeping-net;
Over the cheek the pack;
Over the arms, the wrists, the palms,
The cream to cure the crack.

Under the skin beneath the chin
The lotion bloom enhances.
Beauty must sleep extremely deep
Under the circumstances.

HAZEL TOWNSON



"Don't wrap it—I just want to show my friend I can open a bottle with my teeth."

Toby Competitions

No. 38—Practical Joke

COMPETITORS are invited to provide an entry for a catalogue of practical jokes, including both name and description. Limit: one hundred words.

A prize consisting of a framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up will receive book tokens to the value of one guinea. Entries (any number but each on a separate piece of paper and accompanied by a separate entry token, cut out from the bottom left-hand corner of this page) by first post on Friday, October 24, to TOBY COMPETITION, No. 38, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

Report on Competition No. 35 (Deterrent Dinner)

Competitors were asked to design a menu that would discourage guests from accepting future invitations and to give the recipe for one dish. Many competitors were too nauseous, too wild, too uneven or too near to ordinary life; only very subtle friends would be deterred by getting a meal they might meet any day on a train. One competitor gave the names of the cookery books from which her repellent dishes were taken. Three doctors gruesomely wrote their recipe in medical diction. A French lady explained

that she was not an anglophobe in describing a typical British meal. One competitor asked to be given a pseudonym if he won as he was not quite sure whether the meal he had been served and was using as his entry had been deliberately discouraging or not.

The winner of the framed *Punch* original is:

F. F. ROSS
16 SOMERS ROAD
REIGATE, SURREY

Smoked Cod's Roc
("Such a good substitute for smoked salmon.")

Bits of white fish in batter, fried.
("Such a good substitute for scampi.")

*Fishy-yaki
("I'm afraid we hadn't any bean sprouts or bamboo shoots, but this is a good approximation to the suki-yaki we had in . . .")

Angels on Horseback, using sardines.
("Oysters are so expensive these days.")

Offer two very cheap white wines; one too sweet and the other too vinegary (artificially helped if necessary); end by mixing them together.

*Shred a cabbage, onions and a lettuce; slice up a cucumber and some aubergines. Cook 10 mins. in greased pan. Add bits of white fish, stir and cook 5-10 mins. Over-season with soy sauce. Serve with boiled rice. Arrange for the odour of some four-day-old fish to be detectable

in the dining-room. ("In a dish like this you can't really taste the fish, can you?")

Among the runners-up were:

Cold Consommé
*Hollywood Eggs
Brawn
Salad
Mashed potatoes
Lemon Jelly
Sardines in Aspic

*Allow one soft-boiled egg for each person. Remove shells carefully and place each egg in a small individual mould. Dissolve powdered gelatine in the proportion of $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. to $\frac{1}{2}$ pint of water, flavour with beef extract and pour over the eggs. Put aside in a cool place to set, then turn them out on to rounds of brown bread.

Serve garnished with parsley.—Mrs. F. E. G. Lyons, Wellbrook Manor, Peterchurch, Hereford

Crème de lentilles gourmande
Merlans aux queues mordues
Sauce unique britannique
*Tripes gossues d'ail trempés
Pommes au naturel
Artichaux pochés à la vinaigrette
Moule blanchâtre
Canapé diable éperdu
Café noir essence

No alcoholic drinks (on principle).

*Cut up tripe roughly and place with a few cloves of garlic in a saucepan half-filled with milk and water. Allow to stand for an hour or so, then simmer gently for twenty minutes. Drain off liquid. Remove garlic (optional). Serve warmish.
Miss B. Wall, Pond Cottage, Elsted, Midhurst, Sussex

Cream of banana soup
(sweetish and coolish)
Fish cakes with cider sauce
(economy hint)

Curried ox liver with matchstick potatoes, stuffed beet, boiled sorrel
(some clash of taste must arise here)

*Pacific sandwich
(cloaked aggression)

*For each guest's sandwich take two thick slices of pineapple and three hard, plain-chocolate covered biscuits of the same diameter. Arrange biscuits and pineapple alternately and sandwich them together with layers of rum-flavoured whipped cream each at least half an inch deep. Cover with whipped cream and decorate with toasted coconut, crystallized pears and whole pistachio nuts. Serve on small sandwich plates and provide blunt-edged scallop-shaped spoons.

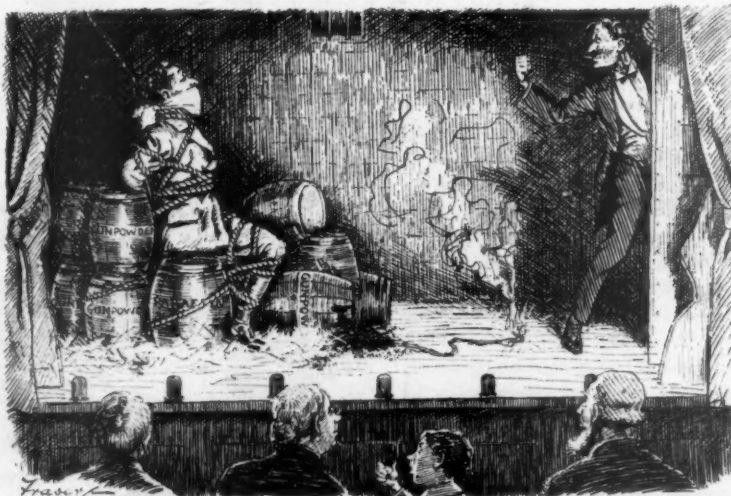
Sandwiches to be eaten by members of the family should be made with broken biscuits and chopped pineapple.—Mrs. Mary G. Lloyd, Homeleigh, Park Place, Newbridge, Mon.

Guinea book-tokens to the above and to:

A. Karp, Trinity College, Cambridge;
W. M. Sevin, 147 Preston Road, Wembley, Middlesex; T. W. Marriott, 62 Louther Road, Eaton Rise, Norwich; Mrs. J. M. Shaw, Wyndpeak, Ridge Road, Marple, Cheshire.

CHESTNUT GROVE

Peter Fraser drew in *Punch* between 1912 and 1939.



OUR VILLAGE ENTERTAINMENT.

Boy (explaining). "YOU SEE, AUNTIE, THE FELLER THAT'S GOING OUT HAS GOT A GRUDGE AGAINST THE OTHER CHAP."

February 16 1916



BOOKING OFFICE

Dear Lady

Letters of Rainer Maria Rilke and Princess Marie von Thurn und Taxis. Translated and introduced by Norah Wydenbruck. Hogarth Press, 30/-

RAINER MARIA RILKE (1875-1926) is a fascinating figure, quite apart from the fact that he is regarded by some as the last great poet Europe has produced. Such a judgment of his poetry must remain a matter of opinion, and one largely in the hands of those familiar with the German language. Others can guess only from the quality of translations and the nature of other material left by and about the poet. Here we are concerned with him primarily as a man of the world (if someone who regarded himself as the exact opposite can be so called) and as a letter writer.

He was born in Prague of a family that rather tenuously claimed an ancient aristocratic descent. His father (to whom he was very attached), an official in the railways, had wanted to enter the Army, but ill-health had prevented his rising higher than cadet. Rilke, after being much fussed over as a small child, was sent at the age of ten for five years to a military school where he was desperately unhappy. That period of misery remained with him all his life: one of those classical hard-luck stories which swell the psychiatrist's notebook.

However, once he reached Prague University Rilke seems to have been very generally recognized as a brilliant young man, and he began to meet celebrities at a very early age. He was absolutely adamant about never doing any work but the kind of writing that he liked and, although in general hard-up throughout his life, he was also extraordinarily good at extracting money from official bodies, admirers, and friends—usually of the opposite sex. The sale of his books was by no means negligible, the *Lay of the Love and Death of Cornet Christopher Rilke* reaching

one hundred and eighty-eight thousand copies.

Some of Rilke's biographers have been at pains to deny the allegation that he was a bit of a snob. It is hard to see why such things should be held so much against him. It seems clear that he was both. After all, some of the nicest people possess these characteristics in a high degree: some of the most odious are relatively free from them.

Writing letters played a tremendous part in Rilke's life, and—if we are going to take up the challenge of snobbery—he seems to have been just as ready to answer, with four closely-written pages, half-baked fan-mail of totally obscure origin as to write to the bevy of grand ladies who followed in his train. Among the latter Princess Marie of Thurn and

Taxis stands apart, a mother-figure, twenty years older than himself, still good-looking, of rank not far short of royalty, full of humour, grasp and appreciation of the arts.

He met her first in 1909 when he was thirty-four. They corresponded for the rest of his life, and one volume of his poems is named *Duino Elegies* after the Princess's castle on the cliffs of the Adriatic. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the letters, and the way of life and background of the Princess, is the manner in which they rise above all limitations of nationality. An Austrian subject, she came of a great Italian house, her husband of the German nobility, while their family connections stretched from Poland to Spain. It was a real internationalism of individuals, and it is impossible to read of them without seeing how much Europe has lost to-day in that particular respect.

To summarize the letters is, of course, impossible, but there is, for example, an amusing account of a meeting with Dame Ethel Smyth, then less famous for her musical accomplishments than for being a suffragette. Proust's first novels appear, by their then unknown author, and his characters are pronounced by the Princess as the veritable voices of her Parisian friends speaking. The war comes and Rilke is called up, his brief military service consisting of sitting in the Austrian War Office, ruling lines for Army pay-books. He writes with extraordinary truth of that first world conflict: "Whatever may come, the worst will be that a certain innocence of life, in which we grew up, will never again exist for any of us."

Countess Norah Wydenbruck, author of an excellent biography of Rilke published some few years ago, provides an introduction and admirable translation. This collection of letters should entertain many people who might fear that something obscure and unintelligible is implied by Rilke's name. They can be reassured.

ANTHONY POWELL

NOVEL FACES



XXXVIII—JOHN BRAINE

Room at the Top has an attractive sound, But may seem crowded when John Braine's around.

The Jockey Club. Roger Mortimer.
Cassell, 42/-

The Jockey Club, as Mr. Mortimer tells us, was not originally formed as a body to maintain reasonable standards of honesty in racing: It does in fact appear to have emerged about the middle of the eighteenth century as a club for those interested in the Turf at a time when a "jockey" might refer to an owner as much as a rider. The Jockey Club, which to-day is the ruling body of British racing, owes its position to such men as Sir Charles Bunbury, Lord George Bentinck and Admiral Rous, who were prepared, if necessary, to defend what appeared to them to be the welfare of racing at the risk of losing the goodwill of their fellows and on some occasions their lives in a duel.

Mr. Mortimer is extremely fair in his account of the various nobblings, assaults, switching of horses and actions for slander that make up so much of the past history of the Turf, and regrets that the line taken by the contemporary Jockey Club is sometimes less firm than in the days of Tod Sloan. Among the illustrations the mere photographs of horses in training at Newmarket are perhaps rather depressing after the poetical beauty of Stubbs' painting of Gimcrack Rubbing Down. The many excellent anecdotes include Lord Glasgow's philosophical remark when condoled with over his bad luck as an owner. "No one is unlucky who has an income of £150,000 a year."

V. G. P.

The Greengage Summer. Rumer Godden.
Macmillan, 13/6

Miss Godden takes pains to assure us that the dishes served at Les Oeillets are authentically French. There is a capital chef—Armand—the recipe would be



"All my ancestors believed in the H bomb as a deterrent."

approved by Hanaud, garlic is used profusely and, sparsely, Garlic salt. The story is told by Cecil, thirteen at the time and retrospectively considering the psychological tangle of the lives of herself, her three sisters and her small brother during one summer month in France. "Children are everywhere, like insects. They can know anything." Upon that pivotal comment by one of the adult characters revolves all the machinery. "I, the chameleon, was with them all in turn," says Cecil.

The story is not profound, yet glances sideways at profundities; descriptively, sensually, Miss Godden has almost Lawrentian power of evocation. The greengages in the orchard grass are not less real than the compost heap. This is a bridge-novel between the shallows and the depths.

R. C. S.

How to be a Communist. Vayko. *Elek*,
12/6

A generation ago there was a useful textbook called *The ABC of Communism*, by N. Bukharin and E. Preobrazhensky; but since Bukharin and Preobrazhensky were shot by Stalin for political deviation their book is no longer to be relied on. Here is an admirable substitute by two exiled Hungarians. Their approach to Communism is hardly as serious as that of the two liquidated comrades; they clearly know their subject from the inside, and hate it deeply, but they hate it in a characteristically Hungarian way, full of quite genuine laughter that such pompous figures as the Russian Communists can be so silly. Their book, *How to be a Communist*, is as valuable a primer of Marxist-Leninist behaviour as ever came out of King Street, and much funnier. No doubt if he were in a position to, Stalin would shoot "Vayko" as well.

The White Desert. Noel Barber. *Hodder and Stoughton*. 16/-

This personal story of the Trans-Antarctic Expedition can only claim to be an eye-witness account in that it is by a man on the spot at the culmination of a wonderful achievement. At one time, the author, writing for his employers, expressed his opinion that Sir Vivian Fuchs could hardly expect to complete his journey and was crazy to continue. Not only did the expedition get from A to B, but it did what it set out to do scientifically. Noel Barber was at the South Pole when both Hillary and Fuchs arrived, having flown in and out several times—he is certainly an opportunist. Although the book does not give a first-hand account of experiences on the journey, there is sufficient of interest to give it a general appeal. A. V.

The End of Pity. Robie Macauley. *Harrap*, 15/-

Mr. Macauley won praise for his first novel, *The Disguises of Love*, and this collection shows him to be equally at

home in short stories, differing widely in theme and background, that gain a dramatic effect less from plot than a revelation of character. His narrative is swift and vivid, but always it is designed to throw into sharp relief the quirks of human feeling and behaviour. Several stories dealing with American counter-intelligence work in Europe and Japan suit his method very well in their examination of people emotionally out of gear. He has compassion, as in his treatment of the tragedy of the old German woman in the title-piece, and a pretty irony at its best in his account of the hopeless resilience of a beaten aristocracy.

If he seems at the moment to be several writers, with leanings towards both satire and the macabre, there can be no doubt that he is a civilized and intelligent recruit. E. O. D. K.

AT THE BALLET

Antonio Spanish Ballet Company
(COLISEUM)

IN the world of Spanish dancing, as exported to these islands, Antonio is supreme. Eight years ago he was unknown to Londoners: to-day he has but to step on the stage to evoke delirious cries of near-hysterical adulation. It would have been more than human if such success had not tempered his artistic judgment. What is surprising, in the light of the concessions which he increasingly makes to the groundlings, is the almost unimpaired integrity of his own personal contributions to the entertainment. In delicacy of control as well as in simulation of passionate exuberance in such dances as the *Zapateado* and *Fandango* in which he is unsurpassed his mastery is intoxicating. Not for Antonio, however, the subtle restraint which recently, at Sadler's Wells, distinguished the exquisite artistry of José, a newcomer but not yet a serious rival.

Having for the first twenty-five minutes had my view of the stage blocked by late-comers and usherettes sorting out tangles of wrong seating, I can say little of the evening's principal novelty, Antonio's artless attempt to present de Falla's *The Three-Cornered Hat* in the terms of Spanish country dancing. The glimpses I got assured me that I had missed nothing remotely comparable with Massine's masterpiece of choreography.

A *Pas de Quatre* inspired by melodies of eighteenth-century Spanish composers and done in dresses of the Taglioni period had charms of grace and delicacy, but they spoke of French courtly elegance rather than of the art of Spain.

The large company is again at its best in a *Suite of Basque Dances* which in every detail of colour and simplicity as well as in the pattern of dance have the air of honest provincial tradition. Rosita Segovia, roguishly demure, with the other girls, performs the feat of alighting

on a wine-glass; and Antonio arrives duly to give the whole affair the stamp of his virility.

A new version of *La Taberna del Toro* shows off Flamenco talent, though, alas! an intrusive microphone now destroys the fine balance which ought to be maintained between vocalist and guitarist. Still, it brought on Paco Ruiz, a dancer second only to Antonio, in a brilliant *Farruca* and introduced an eight-man *Zapateado* in which the dancers achieve a miracle of synchronized precision. Carmen Rojas, the company's fiery soubrette, is an old favourite and takes her few chances with fine spirit.

C. B. MORTLOCK

AT THE PLAY

Shadow of Heroes (PICCADILLY)
Julius Caesar (OLD VIC)

ROBERT ARDREY's *Shadow of Heroes* raises the interesting question of the effect on an audience of knowing that an author has been as faithful as possible to actual events. Is a play any more powerful for being true? Might not the author have produced a more dramatic play if he had not tied himself literally to facts?

As an international journalist stationed in Geneva Mr. Ardrey had been able to study and check the history of the Communist movement in Hungary from 1944 to 1956; on the stage he is represented by Emlyn Williams, who acts as compère and tells us whenever, owing to the death of witnesses and so on, there is a gap in the known evidence. Mr. Williams, wearing a soft hat and tweed overcoat, speaks with cold assurance, and the effect is as if we were listening to an illustrated physics lecture from an exceedingly objective demonstrator. I found the result clinical where it should have been moving; Mr. Williams' tight little slabs of history broke up the tension and seemed to drain the humanity even from scenes exciting in themselves.

The play centres on three fanatical Hungarian Communists, Lazlo Rajk and his wife Julia, and Janos Kadar. At the start they are leading the underground movement in Budapest and on the run from the Nazis. When the Russian army comes in they are coolly received by the Soviet commissars, and employed only for the purposes of Moscow. Given ministries in the new Government, the two men are suspected of putting Hungary before world Communism. In 1949 Rajk is double-crossed by Kadar into a confession for which he is hanged; and Kadar himself is soon broken though left at liberty. By 1956 the uprising of nationalism has become sufficiently dangerous for the Soviet thugs to give Rajk a belated State funeral and to allow Julia to make an embittered speech which, according to Mr. Ardrey, triggers off the revolution.

All this is presented in short episodes,



Janos Kadar—ALAN WEBB

Julia Rajk—PEGGY ASHCROFT

[*Shadow of Heroes*]

with no décor beyond movable screens. I admired Peter Hall's production. I was gripped, but I felt nothing. It was not only the intervention of the compère that damped emotion. The tortuous jugglings of the Communist mind are only of textbook interest; the characters may possess ruthless courage, but they are all pretty tough babies who strike no immediate sympathy. They are, as they were, pawns in an ugly game. Others may feel

stamp of Khrushchev. In the spate of short scenes only Mr. Webb is able to develop a character in the round, and he does it brilliantly.

Douglas Seale is a producer who lets Shakespeare speak for himself, both as playwright and poet. His *Julius Caesar* at the Old Vic is sound and full of vigour, and Berkeley Sutcliffe has dressed it handsomely and flooded the stage with a magnificent red curtain. All the male leads have good voices and respect for the verse; they bring exciting vitality to the clash of Roman politics, and they even manage their absurd military manoeuvres with dignity, though it seemed to me that as a body they share with Charles II a tendency to die very slowly, with the maximum of agonized rotation.

John Phillips has a tremendous voice, which sometimes takes control at the

REP SELECTION

Northampton Rep, *Jane Eyre* until
October 25th.
Colchester Rep, *The Voice of the Turtle*
until October 18th.
Connaught, Worthing, *Any Other*
Business until October 18th.
Palace, Westcliff, *Night Must Fall*
until October 18th.

quite differently. The quality of the acting is as good as it can be in the circumstances: Peggy Ashcroft as Julia, torn between the Party and her feelings as a wife and mother, Mogens Wieth as the single-minded leader, Alan Webb as Kadar, too weak to stand the strain at the top, Stephen Murray as a cynical Russian intellectual, and Martin Miller as an opportunist vulgarian after the

PUNCH IN THE THEATRE

An exhibition of theatrical drawings and caricatures from *Punch* over the last one hundred and seventeen years is now at the Civic Theatre, Chesterfield, and the Citizens' Theatre, Glasgow. In London an exhibition of *Punch* theatre drawings is at the Saville Theatre.

later stages of his Brutus, but it is an intelligent performance. So is Michael Hordern's Cassius, anxious and nervy; together they engender a heat of anger in the quarrel scene which must have been heard in the opposing camp. Jack May plays both the Cæsars (an innovation, I think) with a little man's pomposity, and the Antony of Ronald Lewis and the Casca of Derek Francis are both made interesting. Mr. Lewis is a young actor of great promise whose power and confidence are striking.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Long Day's Journey into Night (Globe—17/9/58), London's best serious play. For fans of Ronald Firbank *Valmouth* (Lyric, Hammersmith—8/10/58), Sandy Wilson's new musical. *Living for Pleasure* (Garrick—16/7/58), Dora Bryan in a good-tempered revue.

ERIC KEOWN

AT THE PICTURES

The Man Upstairs
Love is my Profession

IT is tempting to start with a sour remark to the effect that the reason why *The Man Upstairs* (Director: Don Chaffey) was given no central London run is obviously that it was thought too good, but one charitably assumes that merit had nothing to do with it. Some of us do our small best to argue the average moviegoer out of his feeble-minded habit of judging any film once for all, unseen, on the answers

to two questions, *What's it about?* and *Who's in it?*—but the distributors are regrettably right in believing that he hasn't been argued out of it yet. This one is about a number of fairly ordinary people in some flats, and a man on the top floor who causes a disturbance in the middle of the night, and there are no big romantic names in it at all; and so innumerable average moviegoers will have no difficulty in deciding that they wouldn't like it. How to convince them that the excellent script, acting and direction make it absorbing and immensely enjoyable?

I wish I knew. Some of them are so determined not to risk disproving their pet belief that on being told this they will say "Ah, but that's all above my head—I don't know anything about script and direction, I just want a good story, and that doesn't sound like much of a story..." And so they go instead to something that sounds, when summarized, as if it would be exciting, and if it doesn't prove to be exciting they are disappointed, but can't be bothered to reflect that no verbal summary of the story can give any hint of the effect, good or bad, of a moving picture. If two landscape paintings are described in detail, and only one has any trees in it, can a tree-lover instantly tell that he will get more pleasure from that than from the other?

Here is astonishingly powerful suspense aroused with incidents and characters of the utmost simplicity. People tend to assume that the degree of suspense depends on the violence or dreadfulness (or blissfulness) of the

climax which is possible and has to be avoided (or attained). In fact all you need for suspense is to make the audience wish very strongly that *something* will happen; whether that something is the saving of a life or the noticing of a speck on a window, the suspense comes from the strength of the wish and the apparent difficulty of granting it, not from the thing itself.

Here the suspense depends on whether the neighbours of the the Man Upstairs (Richard Attenborough) will manage to prevent a bluff no-nonsense police-inspector (Bernard Lee) from driving him over the edge to insanity by strong-arm treatment. We have seen the way tiny accidents and misunderstandings, moments of selfishness or bad temper, have worked with the sincere if not always laudable motives of a number of ordinary people to blow up a simple situation to a size involving police, firemen, possibly tear-gas, and great misery for the Man. The well-done script (Alun Falconer), admirable character playing and direction have made us care strongly about this and hope that the kind-hearted housewife downstairs (Dorothy Alison) will influence the others in time to make the police take some notice of the Mental Welfare Officer (Donald Houston) and treat the man gently. *In time*—there is the suspense, and it builds up tremendously. In sheer entertainment value this is worth many films ten times as big and expensive.

I suppose we have to call it *Love is my Profession* (Director: Claude Autant-Lara) because that is the title under which they advertise it; but its French title is *En Cas de Malheur*, and it deserves better than that English title and the kind of audience it will attract. It comes from a Simenon novel, and presents Jean Gabin as a successful lawyer who becomes infatuated with the empty-headed, conscienceless, utterly selfish little creature (Brigitte Bardot) he defends on a robbery charge. No need to tell you what happens; even without the jealousy of the flashing-eyed admirer who regards her as his, no good could come of this situation in a Simenon story, and the inevitable tragedy ends it. But the film is not unworthy of its distinguished director, and the cheap publicity they give Mlle. Bardot these days should not weigh against his reputation and that of the other players. Edwige Feuillère gives a beautiful performance as the lawyer's wife, watching with sad and ironic amusement the progress of his affair with the kind of girl she obviously knows he can never resist.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Cat on a Hot Tin Roof has arrived in London; review next week. *The Defiant Ones* (1/10/58) and *The Cranes are Flying* (24/9/58) continue.



[The Man Upstairs

Inspector Thompson—BERNARD LEE

The Defiant Ones is also among the releases, and another is *The Man Upstairs* (see above): two not to be missed.

RICHARD MALLETT

AT THE GALLERY

Bonnard and Ardizzone

THOSE who have been encouraged by the poster showing a strong portrait of Gauguin's mother when young—painted from a photograph—may well be led to expect big things from the collection of modern pictures belonging to Mr. Moltzau of Oslo, now enjoying the cold hospitality of the perennially white-walled visitors' rooms at the Tate Gallery. They will not, on the whole, be disappointed. I would myself go a long way to see Bonnard's family group (painted about 1902, at the Bonnard family home in the country). It has all that artist's battery of wit, charm, and cosiness, combined with an admirable design, varied texture, and sense of light and space. Other Bonnards, a fine Renoir portrait, Cézannes, Matisse and a Vlaminck, in addition to an extremely lively Dufy (an Indian girl against a flowered wallpaper) tone in admirably with this masterpiece; as do a group of Picasso drawings and a late Braque painting, gayer but more staccato than his earlier efforts. After this the collection tends to become increasingly dehumanized, and—to express a personal view—less interesting.

Having declared myself on this point I may be forgiven if, from the Leicester Galleries current trio, I comment only on Ardizzone. Edward Ardizzone is, it appears, an unrepenting descendant—and I hope not the last—of a great line of illustrators and draughtsmen, including Daumier, Rowlandson, Constantin Guys and Charles Keene. His technique, of which he is a master, is that of the tinted or stained drawing: line forms the backbone of the drawing, and light and shade and colour are subservient to it. Like Bonnard—who never, I think, did an abstract—Ardizzone is inspired by the human scene; his humour is not savage, and sometimes—in his police-court drawings—leaves us suspended between laughter and tears. His self-appointed task is to render, in exquisite terms, what in other hands could be so easily sordid: pubs, queues, jiving parties, and family sunbathing. Therein lies the measure of his great merit.

Moltzau Collection. Closes November 2. Leicester Galleries. Closes October 22.

ADRIAN DAINTRY

ERNEST SHEPARD SHOW

A show of Ernest Shepard watercolours, book illustrations and *Punch* originals is at Foyle's Gallery, Charing Cross Road, W.C.2, until November 8.

ON THE AIR

"Please, Sir, Me, Sir!"

THE basic attraction of watching quiz games on TV is, I suppose, the release they provide for bottled childhood tensions. This is the classroom, but freed from fear of magisterial reprisals. It applies with the non-prizegiving "Brains Trust" and "Animal, Vegetable and Mineral" down to the most cretinous and highly rewarded ITA offering that I could name (but won't). Bertie Wooster put the point of it finely, and for all time, when he said:

"My mental attitude, in short, was about that of an African explorer who by prompt shinning up a tree has just contrived to elude a quick-tempered crocodile and gathers from a series of shrieks below that his faithful native bearer has not been so fortunate. I mean to say he mourns, no doubt, as he listens to the doings, but though his heart may bleed, he cannot help his primary emotion being one of sober relief that, however sticky life may have become for native bearers, he, personally, is sitting on top of the world."

I get the same sober relief from doing crossword puzzles, reading Oliver Edwards and even curling up with a "teaching" novelist, be he Scott (history) or Dornford Yates (manners). I am looking in through the classroom window with no fear of exams, and, if the master sees me, I can run away.

It would be interesting to try "Dotto" or "Ask Me Another" or "Keep It in the Family" on an audience of people who, for some reason, never sat in a class at a tender age under dictatorial and disciplinary authority, answering questions competitively to establish a pecking order. But whom could one find? Princesses who were not allowed to go to school? Correspondence-taught aborigines? It would be very difficult to locate even a handful of people free of the competitive taint of education, free of the wounds of class-warfare, the tensions of "Please, sir, me, sir!" in their souls. But if we could gather enough unwounded and unwound innocents of that sort to watch "Dotto" from the hall, I imagine it would make a silent nonsense of the show.

Each new peak-hour TV game seems to pinch ideas from its predecessors. The tick-tock of the crescendo clock, the sound-proof booth, the thumbscrew music... these evoke the classroom, and their logic is as compulsive, and about as valid, as the circus logic that demands that the man who feeds the performing seals should be dressed as an admiral. The gimmicks of these quiz shows are designed to take us back to the raw, chilblainy, doom-shaped days of childhood when it wasn't good enough to know the answers: you had to spout them out quicker than Michael or Mildred.

Other instincts, properly suppressed since childhood, are given an airing. We are encouraged to *stare* (Intrusion Into Private Grief). The camera points straight into the pudding face of thirteen-year-old Mildred while she tries, against the clock and for visible rewards (a canteen of silver, an off-mink coat) to give the names of three plays of Shakespeare. We yearn to help her (showing off). We think deliciously of the Giles-family rows afterwards, when Mildred gets it in the neck for losing the household those glittering prizes. And we long for someone to drop a clanger, give an impolite rhyme for "moon" or start a quarrel with the other side. It would please me, even, if one day, when jolly Bill Owen said to the grandmother "Can I call you grandma?" she said "No, you damned well can't!"

Quick note.—There is much too much lazy use made of the framed photograph in TV plays. I quote from Bertie Wooster again (the ghastly village concert in "The Mating Season").

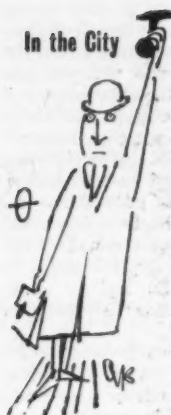
"A minion came on to the stage carrying a table. On it he placed a framed photograph, and I knew we were for it. Show Bertram Wooster a table and a framed photograph, and you don't have to tell him what the upshot is going to be. Muriel Kegley-Bassington stood revealed as a "My Hero" from *The Chocolate Soldier* addict."

Show me a framed photograph on any TV play set, and my old eyelid-twitch starts again until they've got past the "This was my husband. He was a good man!" line.

RICHARD USBORNE



In the City



Yanks on the Gold Trail

THIS is the time of year when interest in gold shares usually flares up. It does so because the great tycoons of national finance, the ministers and central bankers, gather for the annual meeting of governors of the International Monetary Fund which this year takes place at New Delhi. This is the institution which has it within its power to change the world price of gold. There is one delegate who can always be depended upon to propose an increase in that price. Need it be said that he comes from South Africa, the largest gold producer? In past meetings he has been slapped down with monotonous regularity. He will suffer the same fate this year and no one really expects any other outcome of the debate on this issue.

If, therefore, gold shares are going up it must be for some other and better reasons than this delusion of impending grandeur. One of these reasons is that the American investor is becoming increasingly interested in this market. This is hardly surprising when gold shares offer such generous dividends and earnings yields in comparison with the present meagre fare on Wall Street.

Mr. Charles Engelhard, the American platinum king, has of late taken an almost proprietorial interest in the South African gold mining industry. He has become the Chairman of the Board of Rand Mines Limited and is a director of the Transvaal and Orange Free State Chamber of Mines. To prove and back his faith in the South African goldmining industry he, with the help of Messrs. Dillon Read & Co., of New York, has formed the American-South African Investment Company, an investment trust which has acquired about \$33 million worth of South African gold shares and has issued its shares to American and European investors at a price of \$28 per share. Most of the securities acquired by the trust have been bought through direct deals with the big South African finance houses.

Mr. Engelhard is a good picker, and what appears in his portfolio is the cream of the Orange Free State and the Far Western extension of the Rand—new mines with long and probably

profitable lives before them. He has acquired shares to the value of about £4½ million from the Anglo-American Corporation, £2 million from General Mining and £1 million from Anglo-Transvaal Consolidated.

The American interest in Kaffirs does not stop at this venture. The banging of drums and the blowing of trumpets which has accompanied the launching of the trust has drawn attention to the merits of South African goldmining shares as a whole, and more American investors are taking a direct interest in this market without going through the intermediary of the American-South African Investment Company.

There have been other developments to draw attention to this market, and one of the strangest of them all has been the resounding success that has attended an issue of convertible bonds by the Anglo-American Corporation in the German capital market. This is the first foreign bond issue which the German private investor has been allowed to sniff at since 1914. He is asking for more.



In the Country

Trouble in Store

THIS is a good year for apples. Apple growers never make any money and when there is a good crop they make even less, because prices fall but costs don't.

They have only one hope of making sure of their new car this year and that is to put some of their fruit into store

until the market improves—which won't be until after Christmas at the earliest.

Apples used to be stored in the barn. You put a layer of straw on the floor, piled the apples on top—tons of them—in a great heap, spread more straw over them, and hoped for the best. Nowadays the whole thing is much more scientific and effective—and expensive.

The mode to-day is to build a scrubbed-gas store which will hold anything from a modest five thousand bushels to several hundred tons—all in boxes. You scrub the "gas" not with an ethereal scrubbing-brush but with a collection of black boxes and fans which keep the oxygen content of the atmosphere at a steady three per cent,

Another, but quite different, facet of the American interest in gold, and a proof that he likes it as security as well as investment, has been provided by the recent arrangement for a credit to New Zealand in the New York market. When the hard-pressed Dominion asked for a credit in London it obtained a £10 million overdraft from the Midland Bank without security—being treated by that bank as it treats its new borrowers on personal loan account. But when the New Zealand Finance Minister, Mr. Nordmeyer, knocked at the distinguished doors of J. P. Morgan & Co. in Wall Street he was told that he could have \$46 million but would he please pledge the £12 million of gold in the New Zealand Reserve Bank with Uncle Sam.

In this contrast between the attitudes of London and New York bankers is written the whole story of sterling's continued pre-eminence as a world currency, despite all the troubles it has borne over the past twenty years.

LOMBARD LANE

* * *

the carbon dioxide at five per cent and the temperature at 38-39 degrees F.

This has the curious effect of making the apples breathe more slowly, which lengthens their eatable life by several months.

Nor is this all, for the fashionable fruit grower does not for a moment think of putting any old apples into store. Not only does he reject those which have the slightest hint of a blemish or a puncture in their skin; he goes to the very greatest trouble to grow the apples, from the very beginning, so that they may be well prepared for a long and profitable storage life.

He prefers, for example, fruit from trees which are less than ten years old, and certainly not more than twenty. He rejects fruit from an orchard which produced less than two hundred bushels per acre—not from pique but because the fruit will probably be large, and large fruit stores less well than small. Of course he analyses the orchard soil once a year (and sometimes has to be restrained from doing so once a week), and while fruit from soil high in potash will be stored with a contented sigh, that from soil high in nitrogen will be banished to market at once.

These are but the fringes of storage technique, to which the boffins add daily. They may yet tell us that the very best way of all is to build a barn, spread some straw on the floor . . .

PHILIP HOLLAND



*Continuing the only story ever written
of the United States by a man who
has never set foot in the country.*

3

SPLENDID ISOLATION

I AM bound to say that at the outset the Middle West was something of a disappointment to me, because it turned out to be in the north.

To make matters worse, according to my calculations it lies a little to the east and quite a distance from the middle, which is in Kansas—or was, until Alaska threw everything into confusion. (Of course, there are inhabitants of Kansas who claim they're Middle West anyway, but you'll *always* find people who want to get in on the act, and it shouldn't be encouraged. Once you admit Kansas, before you know where you are you'll have New Mexico hammering at the door, and the thing will become farcical.)

On the whole I believe it would be more accurate to call the Middle West the Middle East, if anything, and I suggested this to a man in Oshkosh. He went on manufacturing truck axles for a few minutes and then he said "That don't alter the fact that Edna Ferber was born in Wisconsin." You can't argue with men in Oshkosh, and that also goes for men in Lawrenceburg, Indiana, where they make buggies for Hollywood. ("Why are you making all these buggies, neighbour?" I asked this man

in Lawrenceburg. "For Hollywood," said the man. "Do they use a lot of buggies, then, in Hollywood?" I asked. "I don't know what they do with them," said the man, "but they sure seem crazy about 'em, and that's good enough for me.")

Dust-stained, smelling of hot rubber and sheep-dip, with alfalfa seeds in my hair and my convertible ankle-deep in peanut-shells, I reached the Middle West after driving for about three weeks in a dead straight line along a highway, stopping only for gas, water, hot-dogs, gophers, highway patrols, road-blocks, landslides, stick-ups, floods, free air and unfenced cattle. It is a region of contrasts: in one Main Street you might see a boy wearing baseball boots and a space-helmet, while in another you might not. Chances are you will, though. It is also a region of isolationism, because its people are trapped. On the whole they don't complain about this, but the fact remains that they are hemmed in, probably for ever—by a lot of lakes and the Dominion of Canada to the north, by the Rockies to the west, by the Alleghenies to the east, and by the hill-billies to the south. (Some reckless spirits have in the past tried to pioneer an escape route down through Kentucky, only to find themselves nailed to barn-doors or held captive in the mountains and worshipped as mysterious ju-ju men). To many Midwesterners, therefore, the outside world remains an enigma, and a pretty mixed-up one at that. They regard Charleston as just an old-time dance, Lebanon as

simply a town in either Indiana or Missouri. Lebanon means nothing more to them: they don't know about Lebanon Oregon, Lebanon Pa., Lebanon Vermont, or even Lebanon Tennessee. And in a little place in Minnesota I didn't cause the slightest ripple of excitement when I put down my nationality as Zulu in the hotel register. The hotel clerk was the only one who showed any interest. He asked me if we were still pestered with kangaroos in China, and told the chef to rustle up some astrakhan for my supper. To give them their due, however, I found that many Midwesterners know about England. England is where the British live. The British roam around constantly in their gunboats, colonizing defenceless people. They are chiefly remarkable in that they flatly refuse to pay their War Debts.

A maker of steel wagon beds near Chillicothe, Missouri, where Sloan's Liniment was invented in 1870, told me that a good many Midwesterners wouldn't have picked the Middle West as a place to live if they'd had a choice. "The way I figure it," he said, "it all came about by accident. In the old days most everybody from the east was heading out to California, and it just so happened that round about half-way they hit the Middle West, and a lot of wagons broke down. So some folks said 'The hell with it, we ain't in no fit condition to do a repair job on this here old wagon, we might as well stay right here.' And they did. So they became our ancestors, and if it hadn't been for

that this whole place might still be Cherokee country to-day, same as Oklahoma, and I ain't saying it wouldn't have been an improvement, at that."

He was being modest, of course, for there are splendid things to see in the Middle West, what with wall-eyed pike in the Ozarks, the University of Minnesota, the grave of War Eagle, the Home of ex-President Truman, and one hundred and forty varieties of hybrid lilacs in the Nichols Arboretum, Ann Arbor, Michigan (free, open daily 9 to 9). There is also Ohio, if it comes to that, where they make soap, tables, false teeth, wine and playing-cards, and where, in the town of Tiffin, Heidelberg College was founded in 1850. Ohio is also notorious for the number of presidents it has produced. There were seven in all, and they were all Republicans. Two were shot dead, and one was Warren G. Harding. There are more Methodists in Columbus than you'd

think possible, and I met a girl student at Ohio State University who was taking courses in Old Provençal and Ice Cream Manufacturing.

I spent enough time in a typical small Midwestern town to be able to form a vivid impression of the place. It has a population of nearly four thousand, of whom a hundred and fifty are dentists. It lies in the midst of a vast, empty plain: you could tear south down the highway some evening at eighty miles an hour (in your convertible) and it would be no more than a flurry of lights as you passed it, or a snatch of Frank Sinatra on a juke-box. On Main Street there are four pediatricians, five drug-stores, three morticians, one chain-store, one corn chandler's, four churches, a temple, two super-markets, two movie theatres, five bars, three used-car marts, two banks and a wooden Indian. This is the centre of the town, and the gaily coloured convertibles make a pleasant sight parked four deep at each side of the street while the people who are gradually paying for them go about their business or pleasure on every hand. Here are fashionable matrons trudging along to rest their feet in beauty parlours after a hard morning entertaining some visiting celebrity at a pre-lecture *soirée* (ninety-seven guests in their very best rhinestones, plus one husband to mix the drinks). Here are two corpulent, beringed gentlemen with hula girls painted gaily on their ties.

They are fanning themselves with their sharkskin trilbies as they pause for a democratic chat with a humble news-vendor under the plane trees. They are running for mayor, and so is he. Here is a bunch of kids, swinging along happily from the nearest vacant lot with bats, balls, gloves and gum, singing some quaint American folk-song as they turn in to the Happi Phun Parlor to play the fruit machines before going home to television. Here is another bunch, thundering down the street like bats out of hell in their sawn-off hot-rods, scattering the quick and the dead. Here is another bunch, in black leather jackets slightly old-fashioned by New York standards, shuffling menacingly up the street with their hands in their pockets and their faces pudgy, eyeless, identical. Are they on their way to a lynching? To dancing-class? To finish their homework? There is no way of telling. Here is the man who runs the town, tossing away half a cigar as he elbows aside the shirt-sleeved cop on the corner and strolls into a barber-shop to investigate some discrepancy in last week's taking on the horses. Here is the editor of the local paper, hurrying out of his office wearing a green eyeshade, to snatch a hasty ham on rye with dill pickle, ketchup and mustard before finishing his fearless leading article on graft in the sanitation department. Altogether it makes a lazy, comfortable picture in the sunlight—a shining example to the underdeveloped nations of the world.

But let us take a look at the residential area. Here there are rows of desirable real estate units, each with a garage and a wife and a kitchen full of chromium gadgets with plastic handles. (There are more gadgets in general use in the Middle West than anywhere else on earth, because during the long months of winter, with the Country Club cut off by snow-drifts and the Mississippi rising ominously and cyclones tossing telegraph poles about like matches and the local psychiatrist on his annual vacation in Florida, there's not much left to do except leaf through the Sears Roebuck catalogue, and if you can't find a gadget in that to suit any activity known to man or beast, there's always Montgomery Ward's.) Each desirable real estate unit also has a front garden, across which the papers are flung every morning by a freckle-faced





kid working his way through college, and a back-yard. On long summer evenings the back-yard becomes the living-room, which is why nearly all American plays are set in the Middle West: it's so easy to get people on and off the stage. Neighbours drop by with pots of home-made preserves. The daft old auntie from next door but one drifts to and from in a sprigged muslin frock, saying "Land sakes!" and fluttering her hands like Zasu Pitts. Moths flicker in the fading light. Pa sits in a rocker trying to concentrate on the funnies while Junior upbraids him for not giving him something to hold on to, something so he'll know where he belongs, so he won't all the time be forced to go around getting into scrapes, like this business now where he had to shoot this cop on account of not being properly orientated motivation-wise and nobody *understanding*. Ma smiles her deep smile, sitting on the porch step mending socks and dreaming of the days when she was the belle of the Golf Club's Grand Annual Dance and Spare Rib Supper three years running. Little daughter sits under the sour-apple tree trying to make her mouth fall open like Brigitte Bardot's without showing the gap in her teeth, while the boy from up the street wonders how he's going to tell her that he's already given his fraternity pin to Lizzie, whose ma *does* let her wear a sweater. Cousin Hiram leans against a post, picking his teeth as he reminisces about the great time he had himself at the State Fair, what with his hog winning

a second prize and all, and the country girls going plumb crazy to be his partner in the square-dancing, and him drinking so much apple-jack he sang a song that made most everybody laugh fit to bust, and the coconut shies and the Fat Lady and the crowning of the State Fair Queen of 1921 and all. Grandpa mooches about with his braces dangling, cursing the may bugs and wondering why the local horse-doctor hasn't shown up yet for a game of pinochle. Big daughter snuggles down in the elderberry bushes with the mysterious handsome stranger who hit town three days ago and already has all the women's heads in a whirl. "My," she sighs, "but you resemble William Holden *greatly*."

Chekhov would have loved the Middle West.

There are, of course, big cities in the region, and among these I was anxious to see Detroit, long famous for adding-machines, convertibles and garden seeds, and Chicago, which, apart from the *Tribune*, boasts an aluminium statue of the goddess Ceres on top of its Board of Trade building, weighing six tons. They both turned out to be lively enough cities, but Chicago in particular was draughty.

At close quarters Detroit was a quaint, seething nightmare of blast furnaces, picket-lines, race riots, and a genuine Cotswold cottage. You can hear the city roaring twenty miles away, and see it belching smoke and flames. Twenty miles away is a good place to be, at that. I don't suppose Henry Ford himself

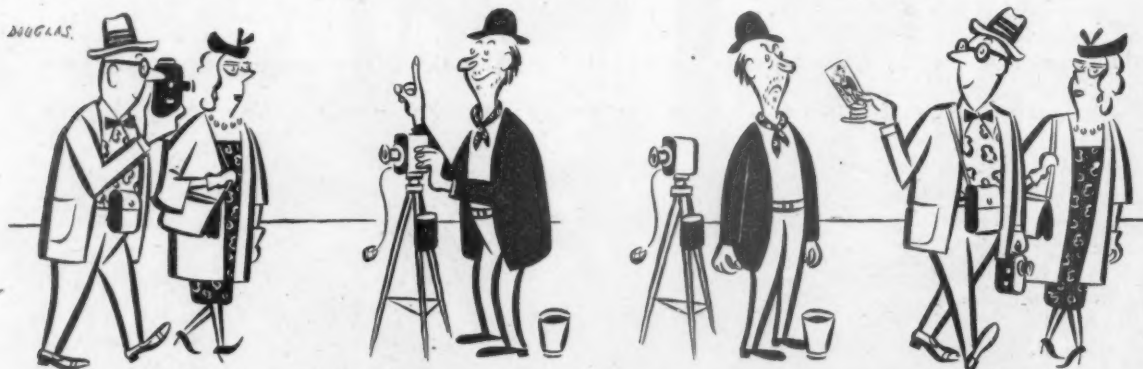
would have stayed there five minutes if he hadn't had some crazy notion that his new-fangled automobiles would catch on.

In Chicago I saw very little of the underworld gangs (or Trade Unions, as they are now called), but there was some sporadic shooting as I drove north on State Street, that great street, and in the burlesque houses, strip shows, honky tonks and other dens of iniquity which abound to ensnare the gullible traveller (I must have visited at least thirty) I thought I caught sight of some gorillas, mugs, goons, hatchet-men, footpads and politicians from time to time, but I couldn't be sure, because Chicago citizens tend to look alike. I put this down to the fact that in the process of evolution down the years from the Prohibition Age they have gradually developed protective colouring. You mustn't think, however, that Chicago is only notable for tinned meat and mas-sacres. I found, among other things, that it has the world's largest collection of meteorites, a river that runs backwards, a museum containing both a German U-boat and a full-size working coal-mine (adm. 25c. each), two statues of Abraham Lincoln (one standing, one sitting) and a college of dentistry.

It was Chicago, by the way, that had the fire—not San Francisco.

Next week:

Up the Airy Mountain



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